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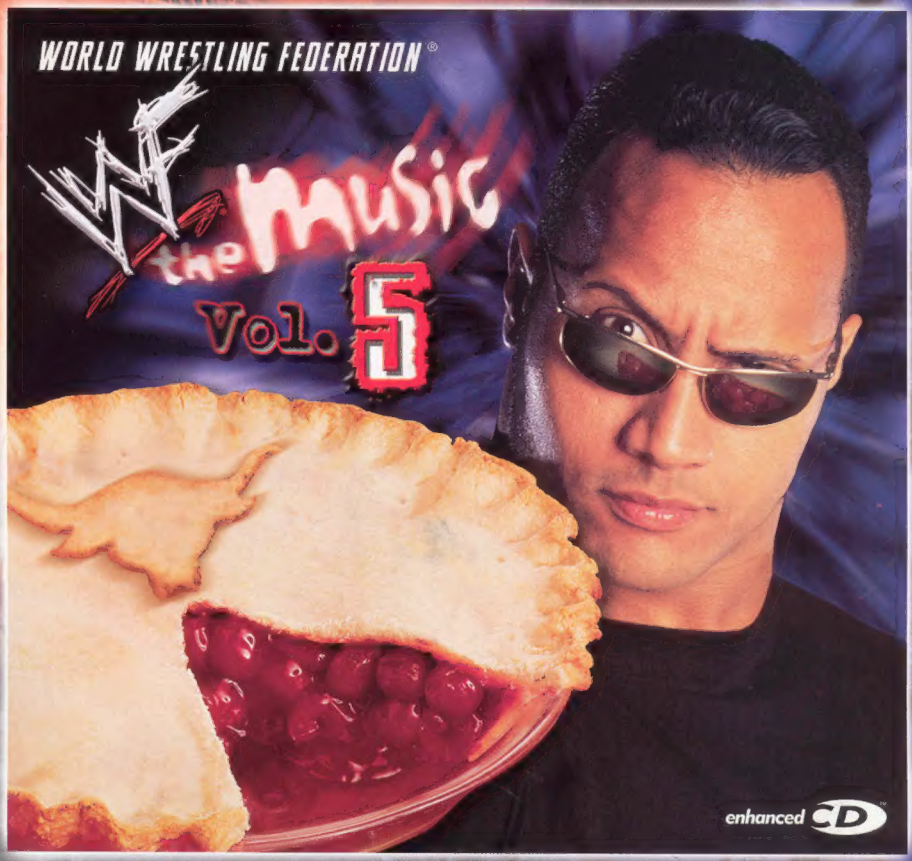

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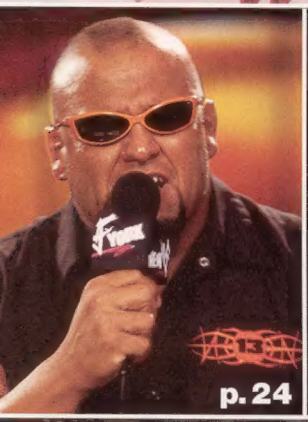

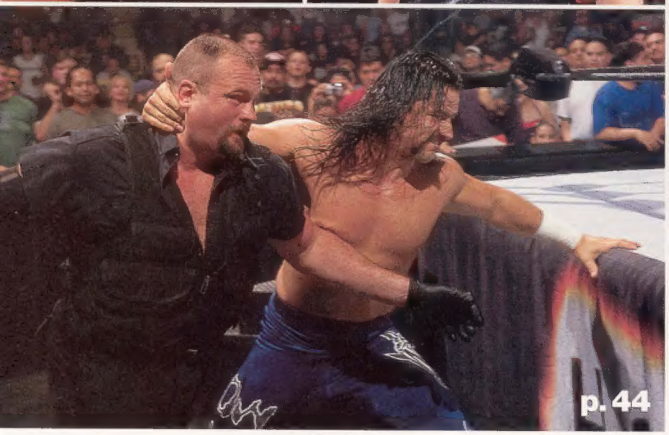

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION®
Raw magazine
APRIL 2001 VOL. 6, NO. 4

Features

16 The *RAW* Interview
Think you Know Stephanie McMahon? Not Until You Read this RAW *Exclusive*

24 Plugs for Thugz
Tazz is as Comfortable in front of the Cameras as He is Between the Ropes

30 Into the Stratus-phere
It Hasn't Taken Long for Trish Stratus To Grab her Share of the Spotlight

38 Forever Fabulous
The Fabulous Moolah Looks Back on Seven Decades of Being the Most Dominant Woman Wrestler of All Time

44 Tenacity or Insanity?
Al Snow's Trek from "Wrestling's Best Kept Secret" to HEAD's Best Friend

52 To Hell and Back
What Does it take to Compete In Sports-Entertainment's Most Awesome Spectacle, the Hell in the Cell Match?

58 Lite Chocolate
Taking off the Pounds—and Keeping them Off—with Mark Henry

62 Polling-Booth Power
The 2000 Elections are Long Over… Smackdown Your Vote! *is Just Warming Up*

Cover Story

Whether It's on TV or in Print, Trish Stratus Knocks 'Em Dead

Departments

4 Ross from Ringside: *The Man in Black Is Back*
8 Letters to the Editor: *The Readers Speak*
12 In the RAW: *The Buzz Behind the Scenes*

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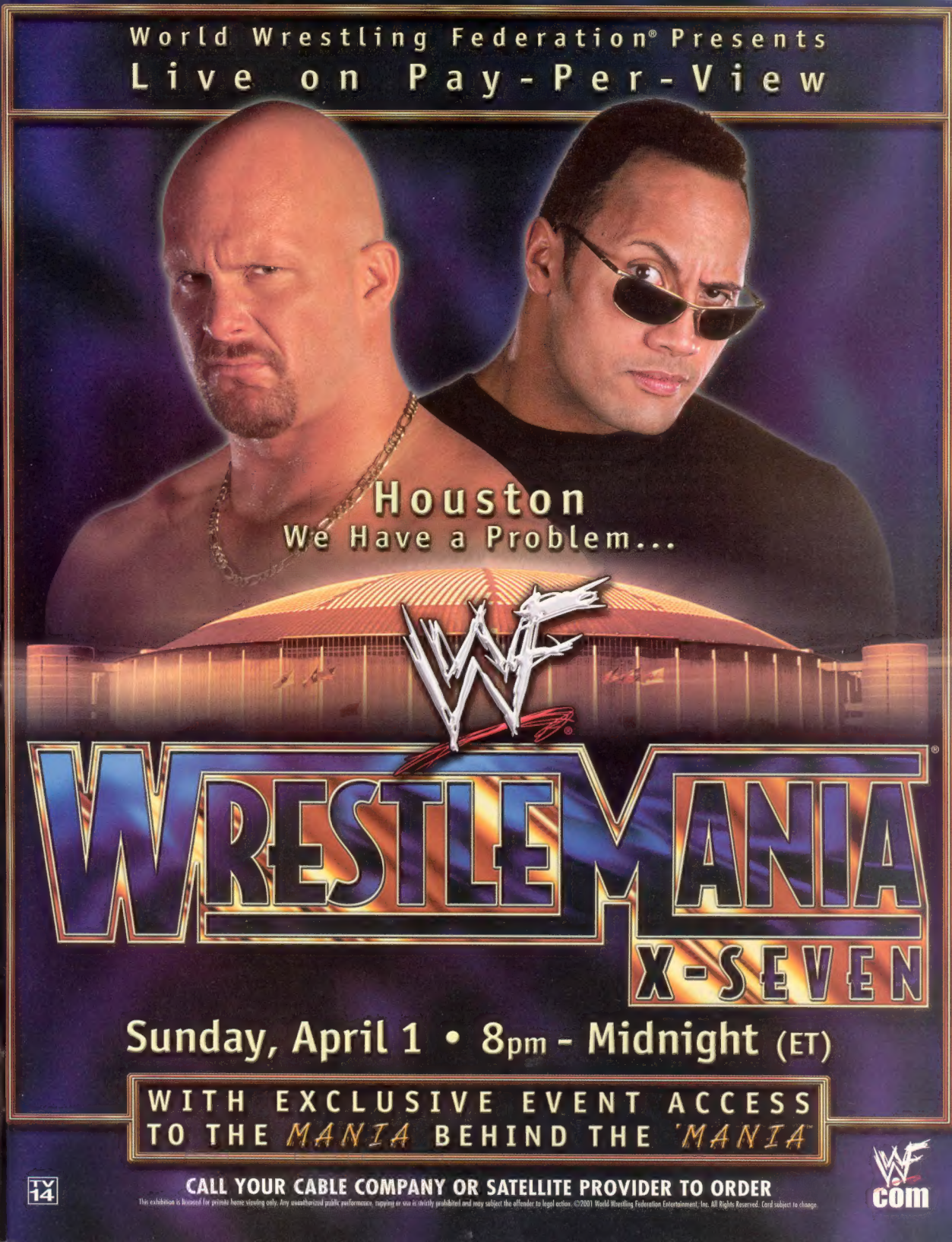

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Raw magazine

APRIL 2001 VOL. 6, NO. 4

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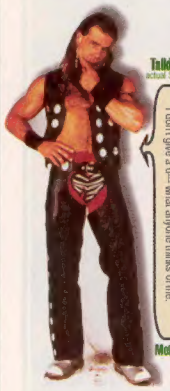

Talking Version actual Superstar's voice

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"Get your candy a— back up."
"Know your d— role and shut your d— mouth."
"The Rock just laid the smackdown on your monkey a—."

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"I am the Lord Of Darkness."
"I come from the Dark Side to take your soul."
"You cannot kill what is already dead."

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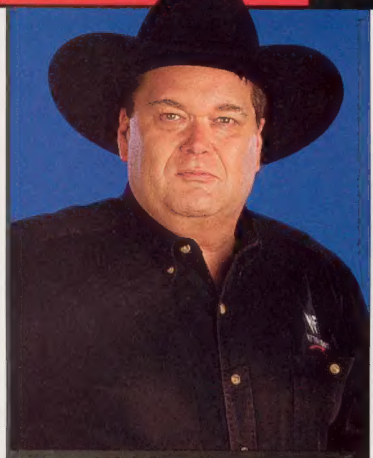
ROSS From Ringside

By Jim Ross



The man under the black Resistol hat fires back at the self-appointed "experts" who choose to look down their noses.

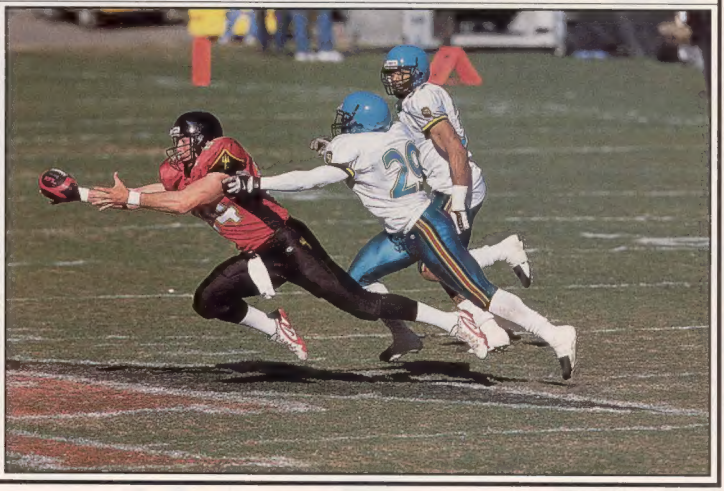
Sometimes my feelings get hurt. Sometimes I just get angry. Other times, I actually feel sorry for *them.* Who are they? "They" are the critics who have taken serious shots at yours truly for my work in the XFL™.

Before I had even broadcast my first game on NBC, most of these critics decided that I was God-awful, simply because I was, as they put it, "a wrestling announcer." How could a "wrestling announcer" broadcast football? What gives a "wrestling announcer" the right to broadcast football? The right? Who are they kidding? If this were a religion and I decided to begin preaching without conviction or training, they would have a case. If I decided to practice medicine without a license, they would have a case. But football? Please!

My career choice to be in sports-entertainment has also been assaulted: "It's said J.R. is the best wrestling announcer in the business. What does that mean? That he can read a script better than another guy." And the most insulting remark of all: "He's a wrestling guy, and ***we*** all know what kind of people watch that stuff!"

That remark crossed the line. How dare they! How dare they take their TV, radio and newspaper jobs, and conduct them with such an elitist attitude that they look down their noses at we who earn a living from sports-entertainment. How dare they make fun of our fans who enjoy watching our TV shows and attending our live events. How dare they disrespect people they don't even know. And how dare they make such a condescending generalization: "We know what ***kind*** of people watch that stuff."

Let me tell you a couple of things, you poor, insecure pathetic people of the media. Our fans are normal, intelligent, hard-working folks who happen to enjoy the World Wrestling Federation. They have jobs, families and are much more secure in themselves than you will ever be, because they have no problem acknowledging they watch our shows, and that they have ***fun*** and ***enjoy*** them. They are the same people who sent me



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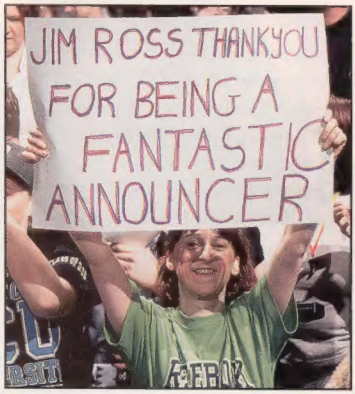
thousands of cards, letters and e-mails when I suffered a second bout of Bells Palsy, which still affects me today. They are the same people who constantly provide me with the motivation to work the most grueling schedule I have undertaken in my adult life. They are my friends, and even though I have not met all of them personally, I feel as if I know each of them. I damn-sure respect them for sharing my passion and supporting what we do in the WF.

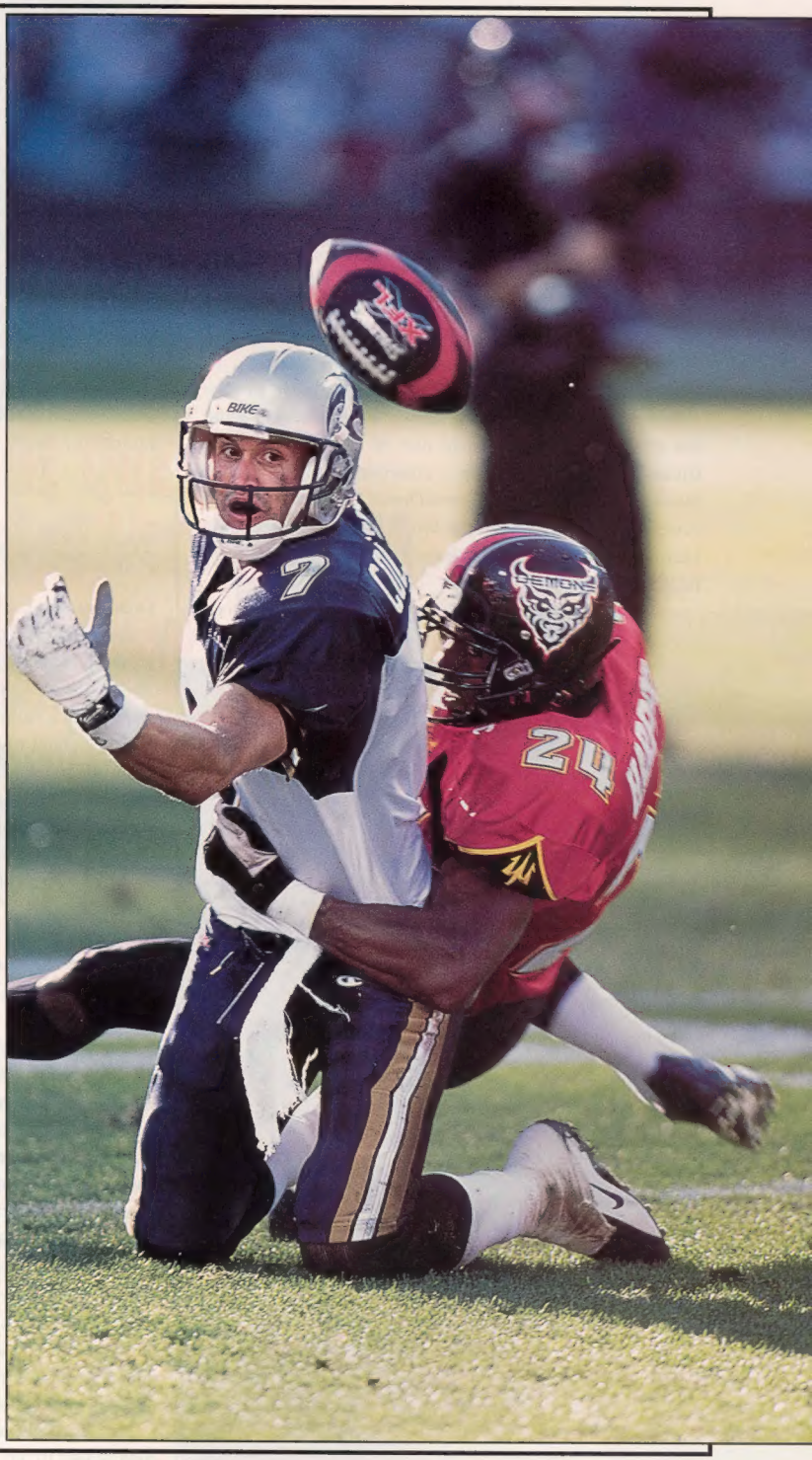
These self-righteous media types can knock me all they want. They can disregard the fact that I am a true football fan who not only has NFL broadcasting experience but who spent 18 years every Friday night and most Saturdays on the football field as an official because I loved the game.



So hammer old J.R. all you want, but you will not break my spirit. You will not adversely affect my love of football or my passion and commitment to the WF. But I ***strongly*** suggest you back off and stop including our fans in your lame, self-righteous, mean-spirited attacks.

Get real! Football is only a game and not life itself. Get over it!

J.R.



fan mail

Send us your comments and critique to: *World Wrestling Federation, RAW Magazine, 1241 E. Main Street, Stamford, CT 06902*

What About Raven?

Dear Editor,
I enjoyed the article on Raven ("Home to Roost") in the February issue of *RAW Magazine.* While I'm not a big fan of his, I think Raven is one of the best Hardcore Champions. To me, he is very entertaining to watch each week on *Raw Is War* and *SmackDown!* I would like to see Raven eventually become the World Wrestling Federation Champion. Can you please have more articles on him in *RAW Magazine*?

Theresa Bucca
Via E-mail

Dear Editor,
Every month I read *RAW Magazine* cover to cover and never come away disappointed. I want to especially thank you for the article on Raven in the February issue. Before this, I only knew bits and pieces [of his career], but became an instant fan when he returned to the World Wrestling Federation in September. I was surprised to learn how long he's been in wrestling and all the things he's been through both personally and professionally. Many people might have given up, and I admire Scott Levy for pushing himself to get back to the Federation like he always knew he would. Raven is a unique addition to the roster, and I hope he sticks around for a very long time.

Danielle Hislop
Via E-mail

No Besmirching Here

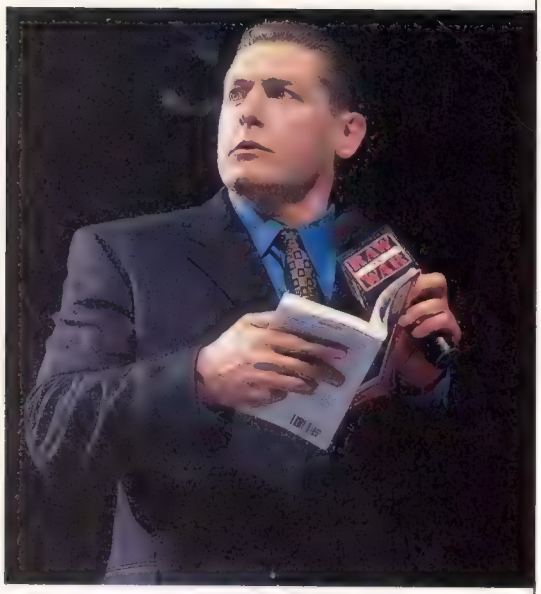
Dear Editor,
I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed the January issue of *RAW Magazine.* My favorite article was the interview with William Regal ("Regal's Realm"). The path he has taken to become a Federation Superstar was amazing, and being from England myself, it's always good to see Superstars from our country flying the flag. I also enjoyed the article on the *Royal Rumble* ("Early Rumblings"). I never realised that it was Pat Patterson who came up with the idea to have the *Rumble*—I'm glad he did. Anyway, keep up the good work, and I'll see you at Earls Court London on 5 May 2001 for *InsurreXtion!*

Adrian Blyth
Via E-mail

Dear Editor,
I think the January 2001 *RAW Magazine* is the best issue I've read yet. I especially enjoyed the story on William Regal. It was very interesting to learn about his childhood and where he wrestled. Being English as well, I have seen some carnival wrestling before. He obviously has great technical talent and could be using his technical skill in matches with Chris Benoit. I hope you publish more *RAW* Interviews with Superstars like Regal.

Greg Iszchak
Via E-mail

Dear Editor,
I had the chance to meet William Regal in Orlando, Florida, the day after *Survivor Series.* I told him that I liked his chain wrestling style and that it was good to see him succeeding in the World Wrestling Federation. I asked him



if he really had worked in all those countries, and he said he had. About three weeks after this, I read "Regal's Realm" in the January issue of *RAW Magazine*. I had no idea what he went through. A lot of fans think the Superstars have an easy life, but it just goes to show that even when you make it to the Federation, it's not always fun and games.

Dwayne McFarlane
Clearwater, FL

This Issue's a Winner

Dear Editor,

As we entered the new year, I looked back at my stack of *RAW Magazines* and remembered how many times I sat down and re-read them until I was so tired I couldn't read any more. As I looked at my collection, I took the opportunity to determine what I believe to be the top three issues. No. 3 on my list is the December 2000 issue. I like this one because it provided an in-depth look at Undertaker/Phenom/American Bad Ass ("Dead Man's Decade"). I am a huge Undertaker fan and the details of that story were fantastic. It was one of the greats, in my book. Second on my list is the March 2000 issue of *RAW*. This one was a favorite because of the article by Keith Elliot Greenberg ("Survival of the Fittest"). This was a great look at the Ninth Wonder of the World, Chyna. The No. 1 issue has to be February 2001. It's full of great stuff, like the interview with X-Pac ("An X-traordinary Life") and the article on Kurt Angle ("Gold Rush"). I particularly liked "Gold Rush" because I enjoy Kurt Angle's wrestling style and would like to know more about him. Keep up the good work *RAW*, and I look forward to another year of exciting interviews and articles.

Josh Palmer
Via E-mail

Jackie Inspires

Dear Editor,

This is a note of thanks for the article "The Rose of Texas," on the life and career of Jacqueline, in the January issue of *RAW Magazine*. I loved it! Jacqueline is one of the top females in the World Wrestling Federation. I think it's about time she received some credit for her tremendous talent—she has captured the Women's Championship not once, but twice! I was delighted to see her recognized as a true athlete and not just another pretty face or great body. I was also inspired by Jackie's statement that you should always stick with your dreams. She also received a great amount of encouragement and support from her family, which I believe is an extremely important lesson for everyone. I am certain that if Jacqueline continues to keep her head on straight and never gives up, she will be one of the most powerful and accomplished athletes ever to come out of the World Wrestling Federation.

Gerald J. Miller
Bayonne, NJ

SCORE!

Jericho Laces 'Em Up for Charity

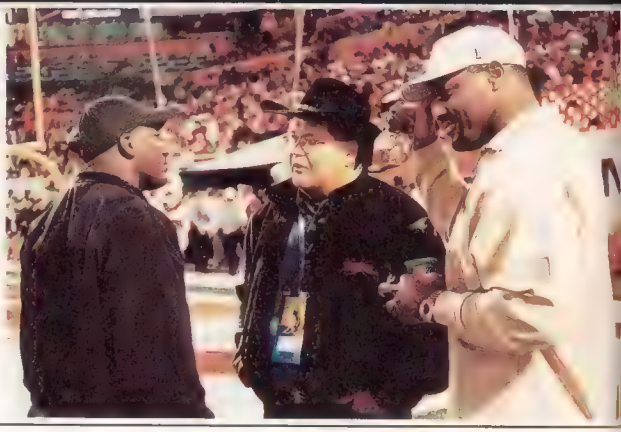
As the son of ex-New York Ranger Ted Irvine, "Y2J" Chris Jericho was the perfect choice to play in the star-studded Rangers' SuperSkate 2001 event at Madison Square Garden. Jericho happily mixed it up with celebs John McEnroe and Jason Priestley, ex-Rangers Rod Gilbert and Pat LaFontaine, and members of the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Barenaked Ladies. "Y2J" even dropped the gloves and brawled a little! The event raised funds for the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation and NYR S.K.A.T.E. (Seeing Kids Achieve, Triumph and Excel).

in the raw

SOONER POWER!

Goin' Bowlin'

When the University of Oklahoma and Florida State University locked up for the national championship at the FedEx Orange Bowl, the Federation provided each team with a super rooter on the sidelines. Well-known Sooners fan Jim Ross and ex-Seminoles great Ron (Faarooq) Simmons made the trip to Miami for the big game, each rooting for their squad to take home the big prize. It was J.R. who came away happy, as his beloved Sooners put the hurt on Simmons' 'Noles to claim the top spot in college football.



Hitmen Meet a Hit Man

XFL™ Beauties Party With *Sopranos* Stars

The XFL lent its own star power to a charity event at New York's Chelsea Piers which raised funds for muscular dystrophy. The New York/New Jersey Hitmen cheerleaders joined *Sopranos* star Federico Castelluccio (Furio Giunta), as well as New York Rangers star Adam Graves (left, bottom right), New York Giants star Michael Strahan (center) and New York Mets reliever John Franco (right). The lovely ladies also met *Sopranos* star Edie Falco (Carmela Soprano) and a couple of young men who benefitted from the event.

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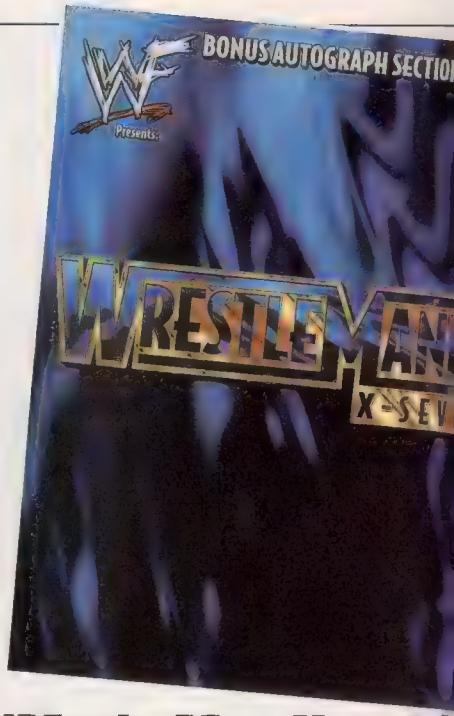
an insider's view outside the ring...

CAPS WITH CAUSE

Few things can brighten a child's day like a cool baseball cap signed by a Superstar like Stone Cold Steve Austin. The Caps for Kids organization provides caps signed by celebrities to children who are undergoing chemotherapy. Young Trevor (below) proudly shows off his cap signed by his hero, the Texas Rattlesnake himself. Austin and many other Federation Superstars work with Caps for Kids and countless other charitable organizations, providing joy for children like Trevor. To contact Caps for Kids, call 504-891-4277.



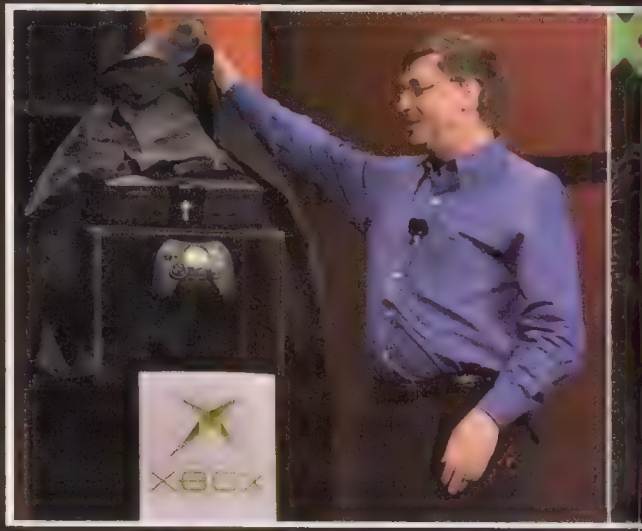
'Mania Mag Here!

Take home all the excitement of *WrestleMania X-Seven* with the same commemorative magazine being sold at the big event! This 168-page book includes recaps of every *WrestleMania,* as well as stories leading into this year's event and a bonus autograph section. Find it on newsstands today!

BIG-TIMERS

Bill Gates Meets The Rock

Microsoft chairman Bill Gates has made it a habit of pulling in the hottest stars in the world to help him launch his newest products. When the time came to unveil Microsoft's new Xbox gaming console, he went right to the top of the sports-entertainment world and asked The Rock to lend his special electrifying brand of star power for the launch. The Rock was more than happy to help Gates. The "Great One" spoke about the features of the Xbox and even nailed an amused Gates with a spirited "It doesn't matter!"



INSIDE

INSPIRED BY THE "GREAT ONE"!

A Real Hero

When Bronx residents Eugene Adams and Zebediah Hart raced into a burning building to save the life of an 87-year-old man in January, Adams credited The Rock as the inspiration for his courageous act. It was The Rock's famous "It doesn't matter!" attitude that Adams said spurred him on to heroism. The Federation brought Adams to a New York-area show and gave the hero the chance to meet his hero, The Rock!

RAW TALENT

SmackDown! Records isn't the World Wrestling Federation's only contribution to today's new music scene. Jamie Schilkraut of the *RAW Magazine* publications department is a budding success as a recording artist. Check out downloadable versions of her songs and order her CD, "The Cold Recordings," at this web address: http://www.mp3.com/JamieS.

Growing Up McMahon

By Laura

Chants of "Slut! Slut!" reverberate throughout arenas whenever she enters the squared circle, World Wrestling Federation fans love to hate her. Yet this is exactly what makes Stephanie McMahon happy—being a part of the family business is her passion, her love, her life. And here, Stephanie McMahon gets down and dirty about her passion in this exclusive *RAW Magazine* interview.

RAW: *What is your earliest memory of a World Wrestling Federation event?*

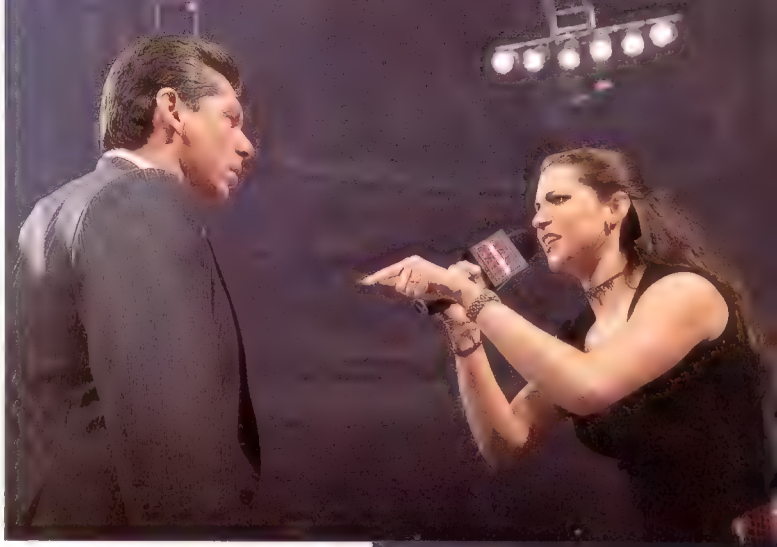
Stephanie McMahon: I was about three years old and backstage at an event with my father, when all of a sudden George "the Animal" Steele, fresh from the ring, came running around the corner, shaking his head, waving his arms and sticking out his green tongue at anyone in close range. He looked like a big, scary, hairy monster. And when he turned and started grunting in my direction, I screamed at the top of my lungs! I ran straight for my father's arms—the safest place I knew—and he just laughed out loud. He thought it was the funniest thing.

RAW: *When you were growing up, did people treat you differently because you're Vince McMahon's daughter?*

Stephanie: When I was a kid? Not really. Kids are kids, and they're not yet jaded by the political B.S. that affects us as adults. But one time, I did kick a boy in the shin for saying that wrestling was fake and making fun of my father. I later wound up going to high school

and college with that boy, and to this day, we're friends. He just wears shin guards when we hang out. I've always been very protective of my family and our business.

RAW: What about high school?
Stephanie: High school was a little different. At the time, my father was under federal investigation and there was a media smear campaign aimed at him. I remember one specific headline, "Vince McMahon is worse than Hannibal the Cannibal," and articles stating my parents were getting a divorce, things like that. I learned at a fairly young age just how manipulative



"I am extremely proud of my father, my family's business, and who I am, and I was never afraid to say so."

the media can be. The articles were simply untrue, and it was so unfair. "But, sometimes life is unfair," my father would say, "and as long as you, Shane and your mother know who I am, that's what's most important in my life."

My peers never really treated me differently; it was their parents or certain teachers. They looked down at me because "wrestling" was definitely perceived as "low-brow" entertainment, and my father was the kingpin. But I am extremely proud of my father, my family's business and who I am, and I was never afraid to say so, even if it meant launching a completely inappropriate verbal assault on one of my friend's parents.

RAW: You weren't born in Greenwich, but moved there at the age of eight, and no matter what the reality may be, no one is going to believe that you weren't born with a silver spoon in your mouth. What do you have to say to people who have the perception that you're a spoiled brat?
Stephanie: In the real world, perception is reality. And people are going to think whatever they're going to think. But if you know me, I would hope you know I'm not really like that.

RAW: Did you play any school sports?
Stephanie: In junior high, I used to dance—jazz, tap, toe and ballet—and played most of the school sports: field hockey, basketball and softball. That's when I found out my knees weren't designed very well. I had one knee scoped [arthroscopic surgery], and it didn't really work. So the doctor told me I needed major reconstructive surgery to move around bones and muscle tissue. I said, "No thank you." After that, the doctor told me two things I shouldn't do were ski or play basketball.

That year I went skiing for the first—and last—time and went out for basketball. I hadn't played [on a team] since 8th grade, so I didn't have a lot of offense. But I played with a lot of heart, and once I learned how not to foul, I was one hell of a defensive player. I was just proud that I'd made the team and stuck it out for the season.

RAW: Do you have any hobbies?
Stephanie: I like to go to the movies and love to dance. I like all music, except classical. I really have an aversion to classical music; I don't know why. I love hip-hop—that's what I love to dance to.

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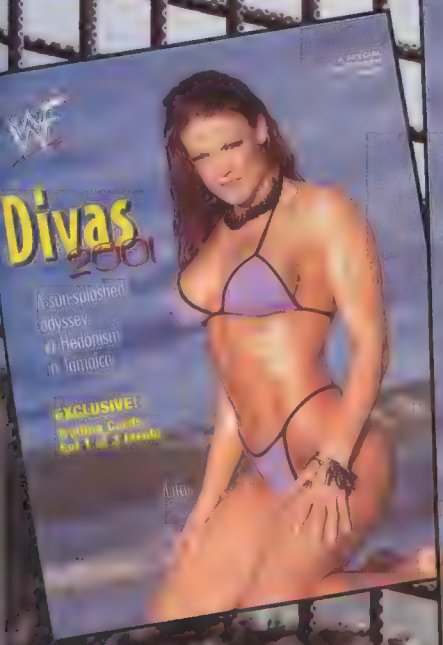

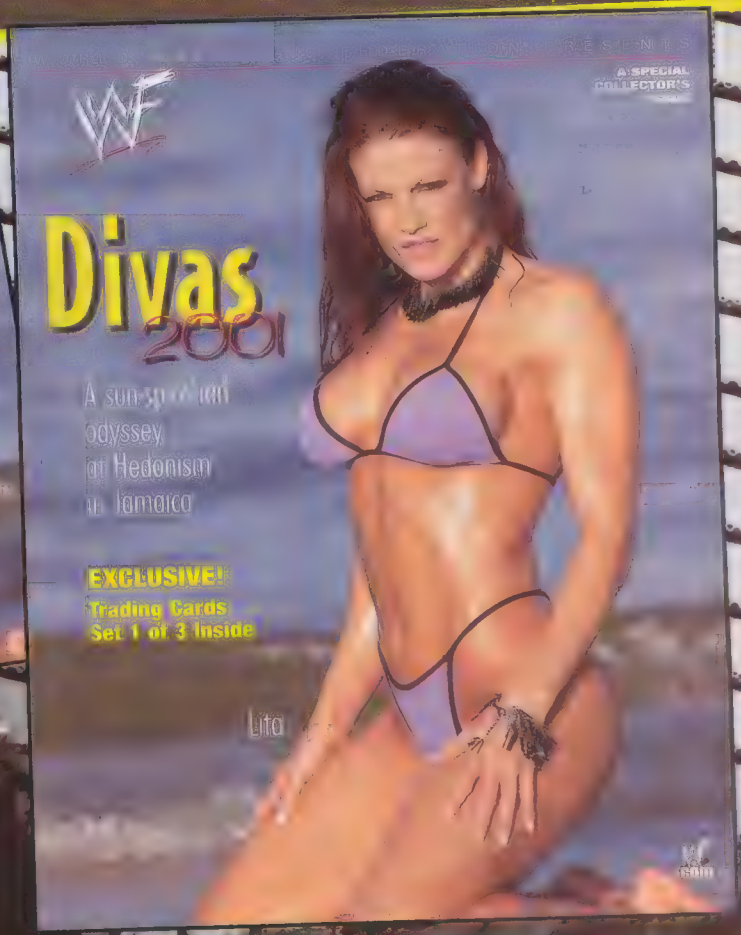

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I like everything from Dido to Kid Rock and Limp Bizkit to A Tribe Called Quest, R. Kelly and Lucy Pearl. And I like more hardcore stuff, like Primus and Ozzy Osbourne/Black Sabbath. I also like '50s music; my mom and I used to dance to it in the kitchen when I was little.

Here's a CD I've been listening to lately that's kind of random: *Guru's Jazzmatazz Street Soul*—I think it's the second one. But my very favorite is R&B: James Brown, Aretha Franklin, The Commodores, Otis Redding. I love music with soul.

***RAW:** Do you like to read?*

Stephanie: I do like to read, but unfortunately don't have as much time to do it as I used to. I love Stephen King and I like mysteries, also non-fiction—real stories about real people.

And I really love to write. That's something that a lot of people don't know about me. I've written short stories, lots of poetry. I've attempted to write song lyrics, though I haven't been too successful with those. I think I'm a writer at heart.

***RAW:** There was a rumor a while back that you were dating a member of Limp Bizkit. Is that true?*

Stephanie: *(laughing)* No, I don't know where that came from. Apparently at one time [it was rumored that] I was engaged to Fred Durst. But no, it's definitely not true. I've never even met him!

Stephanie became a formidable ring presence in a very short time, whether she's getting in Stone Cold Steve Austin's face (above left), brawling with Trish (above) or firing off one of her trademark withering glares (left).

***RAW:** What about your dating life? Is it hard to meet someone?*

Stephanie: Dating can be difficult, especially because you never really know where someone's coming from. But I really am a hopeless romantic and believe that when it's meant to be it will just be.

***RAW:** Who would you say has been your role model?*

Stephanie: My mother. My mother has taught me how to be a woman, and what it means to be a powerful woman in a man's world. My mom is truly amazing—even though she's now in a mental ward! *(laughs)* She grew up in a small town in North Carolina that the majority of the population doesn't even know exists, and has gone on to become the CEO of a billion-dollar company that she and my father helped grow: World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc. And most importantly, she is the most loving wife and

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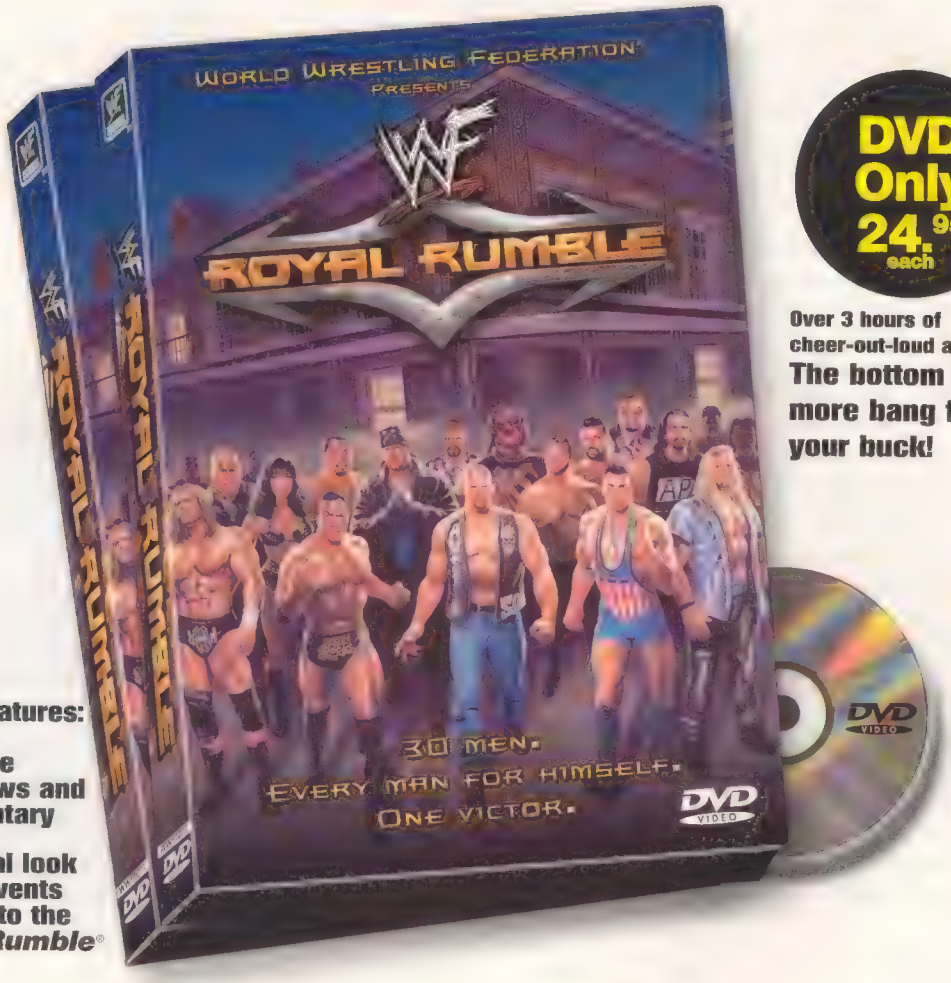

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mother a family has ever known. My mother and father have been through more together than I will probably ever know, and they're still together.

***RAW:** You work with your mother, but you work much more closely with your father. What is it like to work with Vince McMahon?*

Stephanie: In business, Vince is always Vince, but he's also always my dad. It's a very fine line; our business is so intricately woven into our personal lives. But my father, as well as my mother, have always made it very clear to me that no matter what is going on—they could be in the midst of a corporate merger—if I need them on a personal level, they're there for me and Shane. And they always have been. But Dad is also always "Vince." Vince treats everybody the same way, but sometimes he's a little bit tougher on Shane and me because we're his kids, and he expects more from us.

***RAW:** What about your relationship with your brother Shane?*

Stephanie: Shane is the best. I'm probably closer to Shane than anyone else, simply because we're brother and sister. My parents weren't around until later at night, so for the most part, Shane raised me. Shane and I communicated in a much more physical fashion. Suplexes and bodyslams were an everyday occurrence—not to forget my favorite, submission holds. He had to relate to me like a boy, I guess; it was all he knew. Shane not only toughened me up, but he kept me thoroughly entertained—most of the time doing impressions of our dad. He also taught me a lot about myself.

***RAW:** Like what?*

Stephanie: Like the time Shane taught me how to tackle. When Shane told me to "start running" I knew something painful was about to happen. I was running for my life when I felt him gaining on me and then WHAM! I went down. Then it was my turn. After hanging around Shane's waist as he dragged me across the field for the umpteenth time, Shane taught me how to hit at the knees. No matter how big he was, he said he'd fall.

***RAW:** Did he?*

Stephanie: He did, hard. I was so proud of myself! That story is a perfect example of Shane teaching me that I could do anything I wanted to do—all I had to do was try. Even though we still "wrestle," Shane relates to me now as a woman. He's always there to listen to me blabber and lets me cry when I need to, but I have a feeling I will always be his tackling dummy.

***RAW:** Have you always wanted to be a part of the World Wrestling Federation?*

Stephanie: Yes. But my parents never pressured either Shane or I. They always encouraged us to do whatever we wanted to do. I always wanted to be a part of the business, though. I thought it was funny that in a recent interview my father gave, he said he didn't know I wanted to be in the business until my junior year of college. That struck me as being so odd because I thought he knew. How could he not? But he didn't know until he asked me.

***RAW:** When did you start working for the WF?*

Stephanie: When I was about 14, I worked the switchboard for reception. From there I interned in the human resources, marketing, media relations, pay-per-view and new media departments, and as a production assistant.

***RAW:** Your first full-time job after college with the Federation was in the New York Sales Office as an account executive and before that you interned with the CEO—your mom Linda—and the Chairman—your father Vince. What has been your most challenging position so far?*

Stephanie: I would have to say that my internship with my father was the most challenging. Besides trying to learn everything at once and keeping a notepad on me at all times to jot down any fleeting thought that he said, I was even living with him at home so I literally kept his schedule. The man does not sleep much. At the time, my father was training to compete in the *Royal Rumble*. You might remember my brother—the coach—and I were training right along with him. My father is unbelievable—the way he challenges himself is just unlike anybody else. He's tough to keep up with. And I'm putting it mildly."

***RAW:** And now, you're a full-time part of the creative team?*

Stephanie: Yes. I'm much more suited for the creative side than the sales side. But it's important I learn as many facets of the company as I can.

***RAW:** Did you ever think you would have an on-camera role?*

Stephanie: I've always loved to perform—it's in my heart. But I never like to assume anything about this business and never knew what would happen.

***RAW:** Your role of late is much more*

"To be able to elicit a reaction... is pretty cool, no matter what they're calling me."

physical. Do you have to train?
Stephanie: I train in the ring as often as I can. But our Superstars have years and years of training. They literally give their bodies to this business. I train as much as possible, but what I do doesn't compare to them at all.

RAW: *How do you feel when you're in the ring and everyone is chanting, "Slut! Slut! Slut!"?*
Stephanie: I think that fan participation is one of the greatest things about our show. Our fans are proud and vocal, and they're not afraid to let you know what they think. As far as how I feel personally about being called a "slut"?

To be able to elicit a reaction from all those people is pretty cool, no matter what they're calling me.

RAW: *Do you find it odd that Trish, whose character uses her sexuality to get what she wants, doesn't get that kind of reaction?*
Stephanie: I think it's because I've been more of a heel than Trish. I use my power to manipulate Superstars who I find threatening. By me messing with the fan favorites, they're just messing with me back. Trish might start getting some chants, I don't know, but unless she does something to Austin, The Rock or Undertaker, they've got no reason not to like her.

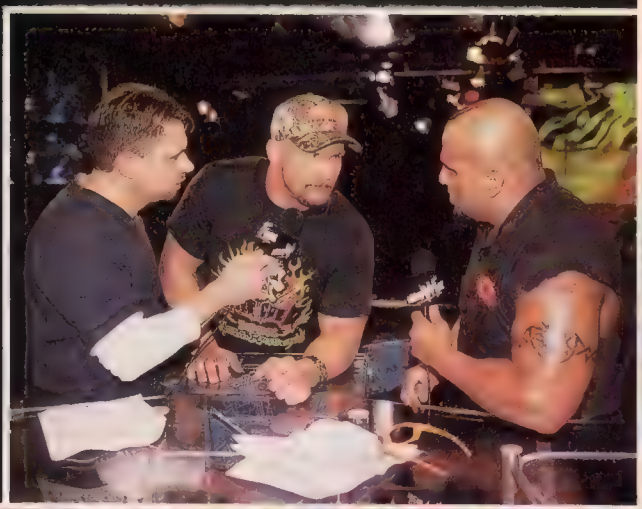
RAW: *WF Superstars have devoted their bodies to this business for years, and many had to struggle to get into the business. You, on the other hand, were born into it, not to take away from the fact that you have worked hard. Regardless, is there any tension between you and the talent—or the outside world?*
Stephanie: I was very lucky to have been born with an opportunity to be a part of the World Wrestling Federation, but it's up to me to prove I belong here.

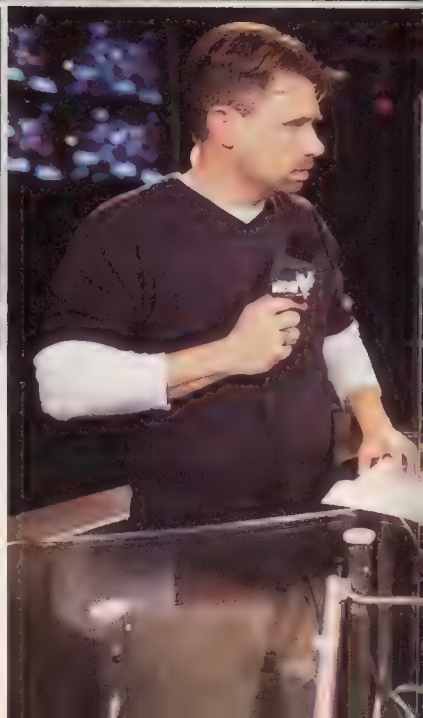
RAW: *You started out on TV as "Daddy's Little Girl" only to turn into a "Dirty Little Girl."*
Stephanie: Well, I'm still "Daddy's Little Girl," only *Daddy* changed! *(laughing)*

RAW: *But you are a total heel. I know, for example, that Triple H thrives on the negative attention and energy issued forth from the fans. Do you experience the same kind of rush?*
Stephanie: I love it. It is so much more fun being a heel.

RAW: *Do you ever get nervous?*
Stephanie: I always get nervous. [The first time] I walked out into the arena was probably the worst—well, my first real match with Lita and having Austin rip off my shirt came close. One of our agents, Jack Lanza, saw the look he's probably seen a million times and asked if I was nervous. I just nodded my head. I didn't even have any lines and I felt like my heart was going to pound out of my chest. "That's good," he told me. "I hope you never lose that, because if you're nervous it means you care." That stuck with me. But I can't describe what it feels like to perform in front of 20,000 people and hear and feel them react. That energy is a rush like you've never felt. Nothing compares to it.

RAW: *Do you ever get sick of your family? Most people have time away from them via work, extra-curricular activities. You, on the other hand, work in the family business. Do you ever get "Stephanie-time"?*
Stephanie: I'd go crazy without "Steph-time." I'm an independent person and sometimes I just need to be alone. But as far as being "sick of my family," I wouldn't say I'm ever "sick" of them. It's not easy to work with your family. We don't always get along and sometimes we take each other for granted—or just slap the hell out of each other! *(laughingly referencing episodes of* Raw Is War *and* SmackDown!*)* But being able to contribute to the family business makes me feel like I'm giving something back to the people who have loved and supported me all my life. The World Wrestling Federation has been in my family for four generations and it's an honor to be a part of the McMahon legacy. ■





IT IS LATE AFTERNOON IN TIMES SQUARE, and World Wrestling Federation announcer Michael Cole seems anxious about the upcoming broadcast of *Sunday Night Heat*. In a VIP room at WF New York, he scribbles instructions to himself, while Tazz, his co-host on the edgy program, munches on shrimp and laughs.

"It's like this every week," Cole complains. "He does nothing but sit around, eat, drink soda, chew tobacco and make jokes about me."

Tazz nods happily. "That's right," he says, slapping Cole across the chest. "He's the one doing all the work, while I'm on the cover of your magazine."

"Yeah," Cole cuts in, "and I don't even get [to be in] 'Rookies to Legends.'"

By Keith Elliot Greenberg

THUG TV

TAZZ HEATS UP THE SMALL SCREEN

Cole is not as bitter as he seems. Since he and Tazz first teamed up on *Heat*, both men have garnered accolades. They're being referred to in some circles as a hipper version of Jerry "the King" Lawler and Jim "J.R." Ross.

"A lot of people ask me what it's like working with Tazz," Cole says. "And I can't really give them a straight answer. You see, he tells you over and over again about how great he is until you start believing him. It's called brainwashing."

Despite his penchant for bragging, experience has taught Tazz the value of listening to those with greater knowledge. At a production meeting before *Heat* begins, he is uncharacteristically subdued, wearing a sweatshirt and baseball cap

"Both men have garnered accolades... referred to in some circles as a hipper version of Jerry Lawler and Jim Ross."

and sitting in a semi-circle of crew members. Meanwhile, World Wrestling Federation staff writer Jamie Morris takes center stage, outlining the upcoming program. The only time Tazz speaks up is during a discussion about a Trish Stratus interview segment. With a smirk on his face, the Superstar known as the "Human Wrecking Machine" suggests how the Diva can optimize her sensuality by provocatively holding the microphone.

When cameras start to roll, though, the Tazz venerated by some and detested by others comes alive. As Michael Cole makes a point, Tazz cuts him off: "Did I tell you before that you suck? Because you still suck."

The process of making television is still new for Tazz, who defines himself as a full-time gladiator, but one whose interest has always included the intricate elements necessary to transform a wrestling card into a spectacle. He ended up at the announcers' table due to his feud with Lawler, injuring "the King" on an episode of *Raw Is War,* and bullying away the color commentator's spot several days later on *SmackDown!*

"I was nervous," Tazz reveals, "especially with some very important people talking to me on the headset. But I just fell into the role of the 'heel' Tazz, and everything clicked. When I came backstage, the boys were full of compliments, which you don't get much because we're so competitive. I said, 'Wow, I wouldn't mind doing this again.'"

A few weeks later, Tazz was given his chance when he was chosen to co-host *Sunday Night Heat.*

"I was happy and shocked," he recounts. "I'd already made a name for myself as a Superstar. Now, a new door was being opened. And, before it closed, I jumped through."

Their on-camera differences aside,

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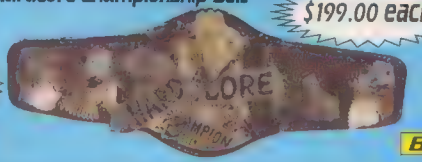

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"From the beginning, the people in the World Wrestling Federation have told me, 'Relax, you'll get your shot.' Obviously, it's true."

Cole offered to lead his partner through the world of television, suggesting witticisms even if it meant being the punchline himself. "What a lot of people don't realize from watching television is how funny Tazz can be," Cole says. "We spend the afternoon making fun of each other before a broadcast because it makes for a better show. By the time we go on the air, we're loose and in the mood to have fun."

But underneath Tazz's lighthearted demeanor is the thug from Red Hook, Brooklyn, who is all too familiar to World Wrestling Federation fans. Even as they laugh at his on-air jokes, there's an element of fear over whether the Superstar will experience a sudden mood swing and unleash his rage on his co-host.

Yet, no one seems to be complaining. Both fans and fellow performers have been comparing Tazz to Lawler ("he's a southern Henny Youngman, and I'm [an Andrew] Dice Clay," the Brooklynite notes) and Jesse 'the Body' Ventura, the former color man who segued his Federation fame into the governorship of Minnesota.

"Tazz has definitely found his niche," says Stephanie McMahon. "I've had a lot of fun sparring with him on commentary. And he has a great face to slap."

As quickly as he found his groove, he still acknowledges that he's only in his rookie season behind the microphone. And—while his *Sunday Night Heat* development is enhanced by his actions in the ring—the rules of broadcasting can be perplexing.

"Because Tazz is a heel, he's had to learn how to creatively praise a babyface without compromising himself," says Cole. "He's learning how to take us to a commercial break, how to get to the point when there's no time to finish one of his stories—things you take for granted as an announcer."

And his New York accent—a source of concern early in his wrestling days—adds vigor to the commentary. "I remember being afraid to do interviews because of my accent," Tazz laughs. "Now, it's the gimmick."

Heat producer Jennifer Good marvels at the commentator's progress: "As a Superstar, you spend years focusing an audience's attention to yourself. As an announcer, you have to direct attention to other people. It's not always an easy challenge. But Tazz is very aggressive about learning his new role."

Tazz's fame on *Heat* has also led to other opportunities. In January, he appeared on MTV's *TRL Presents: VJ for a Day*, and earned accolades for his tough-yet-humorous appearance. He was also invited onto CBS's *Late, Late Show with Craig Kilborn*, using the forum to pick on Cole when he wasn't around to fire back.

"I call him Michael Coleslaw," Tazz proclaims. "He's lucky I mentioned his name."

Remembers Tazz, "Some people might have been surprised to turn on their TVs and see me instead of Triple H, Stone Cold Steve Austin or The Rock. But I'm not surprised at all. From the beginning, the people in charge of the World Wrestling Federation have told me, 'Relax, you'll get your shot.' Obviously, it's true."

His appearances outside the ring have led to a curious situation when Tazz locks up for battle. "In some towns, I'm getting cheered like crazy," he relates. "In some places, I get a mixed reaction. But—even though I'm a heel—it's never all boos. The fans don't know what to make of me. And that's good—because they have to keep watching to find out more." ■

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Black and red with white lettering. Aluminum. 6" x 12".
#35221 **$8.00**

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D. THE ROCK SUNGLASSES
Red bull logo on lenses. Goldtone metal frame. UV protection. Plastic lenses. Comes with plastic carry case.
#35026 **$12.00**

D

E. NEW! THE ROCK ILLUSTRATED T-SHIRT
Black. 100% cotton.
Sizes: M L XL XXL
#35245 **$25.00**

F. THE ROCK "JUST BRING IT" CAP
White embroidered letters. Black. 100% brushed cotton. Structured.
#35215 **$20.00**

E

F

G

G. NEW! THE ROCK TANK TOP
Hey, if you had arms like The Rock, you'd show them off too, right? Black. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#35242 **$20.00**

H. NEW! THE ROCK SCROLL POSTER
Are you one of The Rock's millions and millions of fans? Of course you are. Then show your fanaticism when you display this handsome poster. 31" x 42".
#35226 **$14.99**

H

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I. NEW! **STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN "STONE COLD BEER" LICENSE PLATE**
Put on your car or hang on your wall. Red. Aluminum. 6" x 12".
#13242 **$8.00**

J. NEW! **STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN STERLING SILVER SKULL RING**
The Texas Rattlesnake will recognize you as one of his fans when you wear this handsome replica of his ring. Sterling silver. Sizes: 8, 9, 10
#13236 **$100.00**

K. NEW! **STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN "STONE COLD" BABY TEE**
Silvertone nailhead lettering. Scoop neck. Black. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL
#13238 **$25.00**

L. NEW! **STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN FRAMED PHOTO**
This shot of everyone's favorite hellraiser is just Stone Cold cool. 8" x 10". Laminated and framed.
#13243 **$6.00**

M. NEW! **STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN BANDANNA**
Red with skulls. 21" x 21". 100% cotton.
#13232 **$8.00**

N. NEW! **STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN "SKULL" CAP**
Embroidered design. Red. 100% cotton. Structured.
#13239 **$20.00**

O. NEW! **STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN "AUSTIN 3:16" T-SHIRT**
You always knew the Rattlesnake was red hot. Black. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#13237 **$25.00**

P. NEW! **STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN CAMOUFLAGE MUSCLE TANK TOP**
Camouflage. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#13234 **$20.00**

WF T-SHIRTS

FASHION WITH "ATTITUDE." BLACK (EXCEPT WHERE NOTED). 100% COTTON. SIZES: M L XL XXL EACH $25.00

A

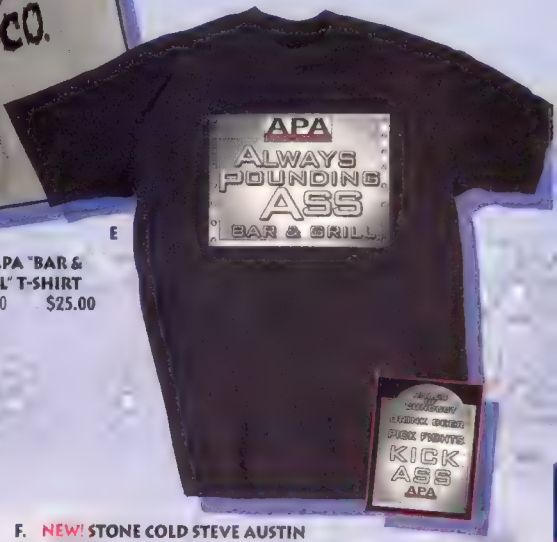
A. NEW! THE ROCK "SIMPLY ELECTRIFYING" T-SHIRT
#35244 $25.00

B

B. NEW! CHYNA CHAOS! COMIC T-SHIRT
#30016 $25.00

C. NEW! DUDLEY BOYZ "DUDLEYVILLE LUMBER CO." T-SHIRT
Heather grey.
#60007 $25.00

C



E

E. APA "BAR & GRILL" T-SHIRT
#74010 $25.00

D. NEW! "THE ONE" BILLY GUNN T-SHIRT
#64014 $25.00

D

F. NEW! STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN "OFFICIAL BEER DRINKER" T-SHIRT
#13222 $20.00

F

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G

H

G. NEW! RADICALZ T-SHIRT
#83002 $25.00

H. CHRIS JERICHO "SHUT THE HELL UP" T-SHIRT
#77014 $25.00

I. THE ROCK "JUST BRING IT" T-SHIRT
#35213 $25.00

I

J

K. NEW! TAZZ SUNGLASSES
Tazz logo on sides. UV protection. Plastic lenses and frames. Orange. Plastic carry case.
#78011 $12.00

L. NEW! TAZZ T-SHIRT
Orange.
#78010 $25.00

K

J. HARDY BOYZ LOGO T-SHIRT
#75005 $25.00

M. NEW! RIKISHI T-SHIRT
#84003 $25.00

L

M

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A

A. NEW! UNDERTAKER "DEADMAN INC." WORKSHIRT
Living proof that deadmen do walk. Black with red and white screen-printed lettering. Polyester-cotton blend.
Sizes: L XL XXL
#03099 **$45.00**

B

B. KANE MASK
Get behind the mask of the Big Red Machine. Plastic.
#44003 **$8.00**

C

C. NEW! KANE GLOVE
The Big Red Machine is the real gloved one...and who's going to argue with him? Right-hand glove with red embroidered lettering and stainless steel rivets. Genuine leather with padded palm. One size fits most.
#44012 **$20.00**

E. NEW! UNDERTAKER "DEADMAN INC." HAT
Red and white embroidered lettering. Back: Decade Of Destruction. Black. 100% brushed cotton. Structured.
#03096 **$20.00**

D. NEW! UNDERTAKER "DEADMAN INC." LICENSE PLATE
Ten years and still goin' strong. Black with red and white lettering. Aluminum. 6" x 12".
#03097 **$8.00**

D

F. NEW! UNDERTAKER SUNGLASSES
Be the baddest on your block. Plastic frames and lenses. Deadman Inc. on side of frames. Black. UV protection. Comes with plastic carry case.
#03098 **$12.00**

E

F

G. NEW! UNDERTAKER "DEADMAN INC." T-SHIRT
Red and white lettering. Black. 100% cotton
Sizes: L XL XXL
#03095 **$25.00**

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H

I.-N. WF PENDANTS

Jewelry with "Attitude." Accessorize your sports, casual and dress-up attire. Each, 30" L linked chains (except where noted). Each **$10.00**

I. HARDY BOYZ
Silvertone.
#75004 **$10.00**

J. TOO COOL
Silvertone.
#82004 **$10.00**

K. NEW! EDGE & CHRISTIAN
Goldtone.
#76007 **$10.00**

L. NEW! STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN
Silvertone.
#13235 **$10.00**

M. THE ROCK GOLD BULL
Goldtone. 30" L rope chain.
#35218 **$10.00**

N. NEW! CHRIS JERICHO "Y2J"
Goldtone.
#77015 **$10.00**

H. NEW! LITA POSTER
And you thought this beauty was only good in the ring. Now you can check her out anywhere. 24" x 36".
#88010 **$10.00**

P

O. WF CHARM NECKLACE
Always keep the Federation close to your heart. Sterling silver on an 18" L linked chain.
#00323 **$25.00**

P. NEW! J.R.'s SLOBBER-KNOCKER BBQ SAUCE
Use it on everything—ribs, chicken, steak, veggies. It's slobberknockin' good. Spice level: Regular. 19.5 oz. net wt.
#00348 **$9.95**

Q

Q. NEW! CHRIS JERICHO SILVERY BUTTON-DOWN SHIRT
Follow "Y2J's" fashion style in dressing for success. Silver-and-black holographic fabric with "Y2J" logo on left front. 100% polyester. One size fits most.
#77004 **$59.95**

R

R. NEW! LITA T-SHIRT
You can't get any closer to the Federation's high-flying female. Purple. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#88011 **$25.00**

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A. NEW! WF REBELLION™ VIDEO
This rebellion was never televised, but you can still catch it in all its glory. Held in the U.K., *Rebellion* set the stage for *Armageddon*™. Approx. 3 hrs.
#00371 **$19.95**

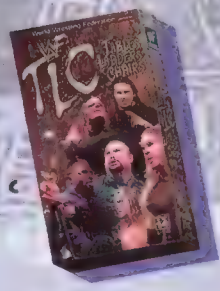
B. WF DIVAS POSTCARDS FROM THE CARRIBEAN VIDEO
The lovely ladies of the WF take you along for sun and fun. Approx. 60 min.
#00309 **$14.95**

C. WF TLC: TABLES, LADDERS & CHAIRS VIDEO
Get a little TLC with the Hardy Boyz, Dudley Boyz and Edge & Christian. Approx. 60 min.
#00308 **$14.95**

D. NEW! WF ROYAL RUMBLE
30 Superstars and only one will reign supreme. The big event setting the stage for *WrestleMania*. Approx. 3 hrs.
#00371 **$19.95**

A

B



C

D

E.-H. EDGE & CHRISTIAN WF GEAR

Totally reek of awesomeness and good fashion sense. Flash photography not included.

E. NEW! "AWESOMENESS" CAP
Red and white embroidered design. Yellow. 100% brushed cotton
#76005 **$20.00**

F. NEW! SILHOUETTE T-SHIRT
Red. 100% cotton.
Sizes: M L XL XXL
#76009 **$25.00**

NEW! SUNGLASSES
Plastic lenses. UV protection. Plastic carry case. Edge signature on side; Christian on lenses. **$12.00** each pair

G. EDGE
Grey plastic frame.
#76010 **$12.00**

H. CHRISTIAN
Yellow lenses. Silvery metal frame.
#76008 **$12.00**

I. NEW! "AWESOMENESS" BASKETBALL JERSEY
White and red design and trim. Yellow. 100% nylon.
Sizes: M L XL XXL
#76006 **$50.00**

J.-N. DUDLEY BOYZ WF GEAR

D-Von...get the goods! Or at any rate, the hottest products this side of Dudleyville.

NEW! SUNGLASSES
Plastic frames. No lenses. Plastic carry case. Superstar signature on side. **$12.00** each pair

J. BUH-BUH RAY	Black	#60009
K. D-VON	White	#60008

"DUDLEYVILLE" JERSEYS
Black and red with white trim. Screen-printed design.
Sizes: M L XL XXL
$50.00 each

L. BASEBALL	100% cotton.	#60004
M. NEW! BASKETBALL	100% nylon.	#60006

N. "3D" CAP
Black. 100% brushed cotton
#60002 **$20.00**

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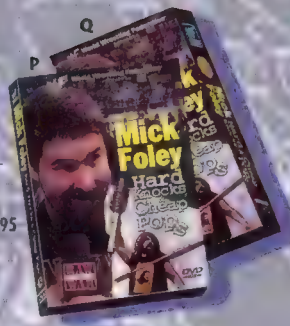
O. NEW WF HARDCORE VIDEO
Re-experience the pain, the agony and the thrills that our experts put themselves through.
Approx. 60 min.
#00372 **$14.95**



NEW MICK FOLEY'S HARD KNOCKS & CHEAP POPS
Relive the hardcore legend's career as Mick Foley speaks candidly about his life in the ring and the business he's left an indelible mark on.

P. DVD
Approx. 140 min.
#11044 **$19.95**

Q. VIDEO
Approx. 65 min.
#11043 **$14.95**

R. WF WRESTLEMANIA® LEGACY BOX SET
Enjoy all the smashes, thrashes and hits while you re-live the excitement of the annual spectacular. 15 videos. Approx. 40 hrs. total.
#00259 **$149.95**

S. STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN CAMOUFLAGE CAP
Orange and black embroidered lettering. 100% brushed cotton. Structured
#13233 **$20.00**

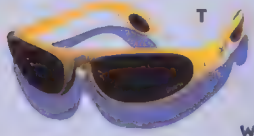
T.-Z. TOO COOL WF GEAR

Show your love for your favorite homeboys. We think you'll look pretty Phat with 'em

U. STUFFED WORM
Get down and comfy with this cute little bug. Back: "Worm Crossing." Green.
#82006 **$20.00**

V. NEW SCOTTY TOO HOTTY WORM SIGN
Aluminum. 10" x 10".
#82012 **$12.00**

T. SUNGLASSES
Plastic frames. UV protection. Yellow. Too Cool logo on sides. Carrying case.
#82002 **$12.00**

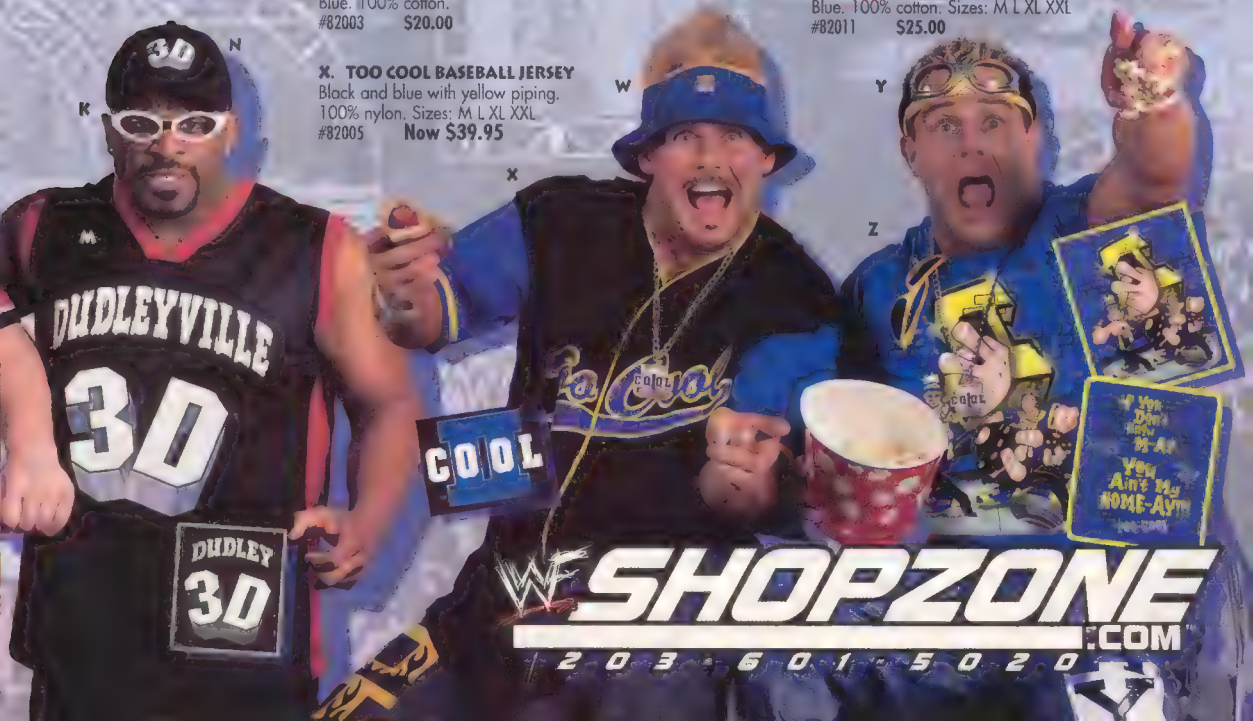


Y. NEW GOGGLES
Yellow lenses in silvertone frame. UV protection. Plastic. Too Cool logo on lenses. Comes with plastic carry case.
#82014 **$12.00**

W. BUCKET HAT
Embroidered Too Cool logo. Blue. 100% cotton.
#82003 **$20.00**

Z. NEW GRAFFITI-STYLE T-SHIRT
Blue. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#82011 **$25.00**

X. TOO COOL BASEBALL JERSEY
Black and blue with yellow piping. 100% nylon. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#82005 **Now $39.95**



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A. NEW! HARDY BOYZ SLEEVELESS BASKETBALL JERSEY
Take yourself to extremes in this sleeveless basketball jersey. Green and white design and trim. Purple. 100% Nylon. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#75008 **$50.00**

B. NEW! TAZZ "THUGZ" BASEBALL JERSEY
Button-down with Tazz logo in black. Orange. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#78012 **$50.00**

D.-E. CHYNA FITNESS FASHION
You'll look great working out in these terrific-fitting fashions. Soft, supple, stretch fabric is quick drying and keeps its shape wash after wash. Black with Chyna's "C-9" logo. Of cottony soft SUPPLEX® with LYCRA®.
®DuPont registered trademarks.

D. NEW! ZIP-UP JACKET
For those days you feel like exercising outdoors, Chyna strongly advises you protect against the elements! Sizes: S M L
#30021 **$40.00**

C. CHYNA FITNESS VIDEO
Got the gear, but need help getting started? Our first lady of fitness knows how to help. Approx. 60 min.
#30010 **$14.95**

Always consult your physician before beginning this, or any, exercise program.

E. NEW! BOOTLEG WORKOUT PANTS
These pants are comfortable, yet durable enough for even a Chyna-like workout. Sizes: S M L
#30019 **$38.00**

F. NEW! SPORTS BRA
It's a little easier exercising knowing you have the support of the Ninth Wonder of the World! Sizes: S M L
30018 **$24.00**

G. NEW! WORKOUT SHORTS
If you've been working hard in the gym, you might as well show off your body of work! Sizes: S M L
#30020 **$24.00**

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H

H. NEW! CHRIS JERICHO "Y2J MILLENNIUM" SOCCER JERSEY
You'll never, e-e-ever want to be without this. Silvery, blue and white screen-printed design. Blue. 100% cotton.
Sizes: M L XL XXL
#77016 **$50.00**

I. NEW! HARDY BOYZ KEY RING
Never forget your keys again with this key ring. Silvertone. 1½" x 2".
#75010 **$10.00**

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J

J. NEW! KURT ANGLE CUT-OFF BASKETBALL JERSEY
Do you have the "Three I's"—intensity, integrity and intelligence? You will in this jersey. Black and golden trim. Golden. 100% nylon mesh.
Sizes: M L XL XXL
#59009 **$50.00**

K

K. NEW! KURT ANGLE "YOU LACK INTENSITY" T-SHIRT
Show off your integrity and intelligence in this tee. Grey. 100% cotton.
Sizes: M L XL XXL
#59008 **$25.00**

A

A. NEW! TRIPLE H "YOU CAN'T PLAY ME" T-SHIRT
No one can play this "Game." Black. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#31029 **$25.00**

B

B. TRIPLE H MOTOCROSS JERSEY
Nothing says you're a winner like sporting "the Game" on your back. 100% closed-hole poly-mesh. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#31012 **$50.00**

C

C. NEW! TRIPLE H FRAMED PHOTO
He's got it all in the World Wrestling Federation. Now you can have a little piece of him. 8" x 10". Laminated and framed.
#31030 **$6.00**

D

D. TRIPLE H LEATHER CAP
Ascot-style cap. Black with embroidered Triple H logo. Genuine cowhide leather.
#31016 **$45.00**

E

E. TRIPLE H "GAME OVER" T-SHIRT
Black. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#31014 **$25.00**

F

F. NEW! TRIPLE H "I AM YOUR PAIN" T-SHIRT
Ready, set...suffer! "The Game" challenges you to buy this shirt. Think you can handle it? Black. 100% cotton. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#31028 **$25.00**

G. TRIPLE H CUT-OFF BASKETBALL JERSEY
Wear it whenever you know that you're into "the Game." Black and silver. 100% nylon mesh. Sizes: M L XL XXL
#31009 **$50.00**

G

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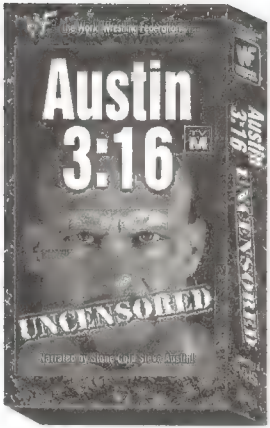

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From Vince McMahon to Shawn Michaels, the Texas rattlesnake takes on all comers. Austin tells it like it is, the only way he can: totally uncensored. 60 min. A $14.95 value.

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Trish Takes Off

This Diva's First Year Has Been Nothing But Stratus-faction

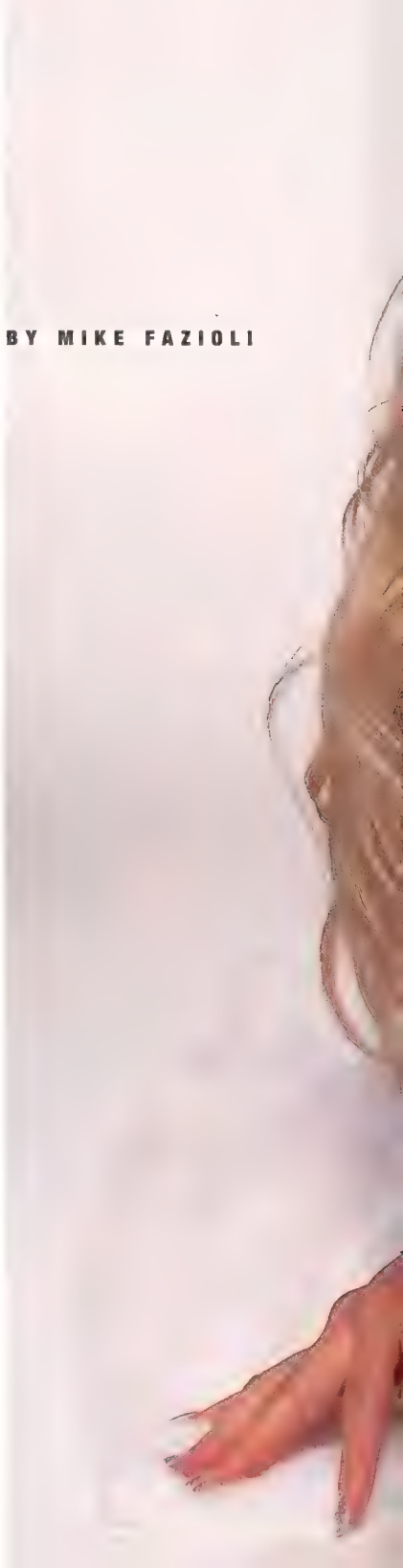
BY MIKE FAZIOLI

It was one of the unforgettable moments of early 2001: the sultry Trish Stratus, in full vixen mode, wrapping her arms around Mr. McMahon and firmly latching onto the boss' posterior. Asking Trish to describe the experience of goosing the Federation Chairman elicits a hearty laugh, but no details.

"I'll never tell," she says between giggles. "I guess I had the whole world in my hands."

Vince's rear isn't the only thing Trish has had a firm grasp on lately. In her first full year as an active member of the Federation roster, Trish evolved from an awestruck novice valet to one of the Federation's premier *femme fatales*.

The former fitness model moved beyond her initial role as manager of T&A and struck it big, moving to the forefront of fans' attention as Mr. McMahon's seductress and the bane of Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley's existence. In addition to her stellar vignette work, she has also made great strides in the ring, working matches against Lita, Jacqueline, Molly Holly and Ivory, as well as mixing it up with Chyna.



Her progress has been fast and furious, yet Trish, who trained for the ring in Toronto with Ron Hutchison, was ready for the physical challenge. The former varsity field hockey player at Toronto's York University welcomed the opportunity to shine on the Federation's stages.

"I always expected to be in the World Wrestling Federation, so it's a natural thing," Trish says of her burgeoning ring work. "With any sport I've tried, I've caught on quickly. It's always been natural for me. When fans started to realize, 'Wait a minute, Trish can kick some butt,' that made me a little more aggressive.

"Now my repertoire is constantly expanding. I find I can do certain things, then tweak them and do more. From a fan's perspective, you come into it with a little bit of an advantage. You're not just learning a move. You've seen that move done a million times. It's just feeling out your style."

Trish's rise to prominence has validated the hype that preceded her arrival at the WF in March 2000. At the time, it was obvious that the Federation was adding one of the most attractive women on the planet to its ranks. What

Trish's rise to prominence has validated the hype that preceded her arrival.

remained to be seen was if she would embrace her on-camera role and, just as importantly, whether she would be an asset in the ring. Trish has answered both questions with a resounding *yes*.

Even more than her ring work, it has been the backstage vignettes where Trish has prospered. Her involvement with Mr. McMahon and subsequent rivalry with Stephanie enthralled fans, adding spice to Federation programming for weeks on end. It was also something Trish says she could not have pulled off upon her debut, when she admits she was more than slightly knock-kneed.

"I feel much more at ease now," she says. "I feel like I should be out there talking [crap] to Stephanie, whereas

before I was like, 'Ohhh, I don't know.' I also didn't know simple things. Being new, you can't be as focused, because you are constantly thinking of other things, like 'Where's the camera? Where should I be standing?' So your head is not fully on the job. Now I go out there, and I'm focused on that one thing. Hopefully, it shows."

Trish's break-in period was a process of getting used to on-camera work, as well as the rigors of life on the road and the passion of the Federation's legions of fans. Although she says she prefers to frequent 24-hour grocery and drug stores during odd hours to avoid the crush, she finds the reaction and intensity of the fans exciting.

And, just as her on-screen persona extends far beyond the basic eye-candy role, there's quite a bit more to the real Trish than the pleasing package that greets the viewer. While her beauty and physical attributes have allowed her to get a foot in the door in more than one career, moving from fitness model to World Wrestling Federation Superstar, they've also caused her to spend a lifetime proving people wrong. It's many of the same stereotypes hurled at her on Federation programs both during vignettes and by fans: "Barbie doll," "Bimbo," and the like. For a former pre-med student who double-majored in biology and kinesiology (the study of muscular motion), and who also prides herself on her athleticism, those characterizations couldn't be further from the mark.

There's quite a bit more to the real Trish than the pleasing package that greets the eye.

During her days as a fitness model, Trish says, people would criticize her

for "just sitting around in a bikini and letting people gawk at you." Her rejoinder would be that, yes, she was being checked out based on her looks, but once she had people's attention, they would listen to what she had to say. It was the magazine exposure she earned as a model that opened the door for her to do interviews and let people in on her little secret—there's a formidable brain behind her beauty.

"All my life people have prejudged me as a girly-girl or as a blonde bimbo. They're always shocked when I say, 'Oh, by the way, I have a double-major in biology and kinesiology,'" she says. "Even when I first went to the gym in Toronto [Hutchison] was like, 'I don't know why I'm so surprised. I guess I prejudged you as this blonde girl just coming in and not being serious.' My whole life has been about being athletic and performing, so it's a natural thing for me. I was just waiting for the opportunity to prove it, and I'm glad I got it.

"I think the great thing was that after hiring me, [the Federation] got to know me personally and saw I had the potential to reflect [intelligence] in a character," she continues. "If as a person I only offered 'T&A,' then that's what they would have used me for. Because I offered a different side that people didn't expect, they were like, 'Oh, good, we can use that.' I think that was part of my being hired. That and the fact that I could get physical; little things like that added up. They thought, 'This is a good package.'"

As Trish's exposure grows, so too does the speculation that she is on the verge of following in the footsteps of several of the Federation's top talents and also pursuing stardom in other venues. Specifically, Chyna's record-setting turn in *Playboy* has fueled the gossip that Trish is soon to follow suit.

Trish says she's aware that she may soon be inundated with offers from outside the Federation, but her main focus remains on continuing to establish herself here. If and when offers start flying in—even one from *Playboy*—it will all be a matter of priorities.

"Of course, Chyna did *Playboy*, so those questions are going to come," she says. "I'm not against it; I'm not for it. It would be a great opportunity. If it's offered, it'll be a matter of timing in my career. But right now [the Federation] is my main focus, and I would never do anything that would take my focus away from this.

"I'm just getting comfortable here," she says. "Every week there's a new challenge. Until I'm no longer challenged—and I don't foresee that day coming at all—I want to just focus on my career here, because I know there's so much more I can bring to this platform." ■

"With any sport I've tried, I've always caught on quickly. It's...natural for me."

FOREVER FABULOUS

The Legendary Moolah Looks Back on Seven Decades of Ring History

By Keith Elliot Greenberg

The house she built on Moolah Drive in Columbia, South Carolina, is filled with flowers. And the irony is not lost on the most recognizable figure in the history of women's wrestling.

"It looks like a funeral parlor in here," cracks the Fabulous Moolah, who is recuperating from double-bypass surgery, pneumonia, an injured vertebrae and a series of lengthy hospital stays that took her to the brink of death—and a near-death experience.

"The only thing I remember was being in my bed," she recounts in her slow, Southern drawl. "You've heard people with similar experiences say that you have this feeling of looking down at your body? Well, that's what happened to me—twice. I died two times in my bed. But the doctors brought me back. So here I am."

Moolah, a flame-haired fixture of the squared circle for a half-century, remains something of an enigma, even to her closest friends. She can be warm and incredibly forthcoming, discussing intimate details of failed romances and behind-the-scenes wrestling intrigue. But she often suddenly puts up her guard, refusing to disclose her precise age, or even the number of times she's held the World Wrestling Federation Women's Championship (the record books say four, but doesn't include such unpublicized incidents as the 1968 tour of Japan in which she lost and recaptured the title from Yokiko Tomo, and the 1976 loss to Sue Green). And, although she's hazy about her journey to the "other side," an overview of her career reveals a woman who long ago proved that she could survive anything.

The World Wrestling Federation Hall of Famer began her life and career as Lillian Ellison, a half-Irish, half-Cherokee beauty with high cheekbones and long dark hair, wrestling her first match against June Byers in Boston on May 26, 1949. Because of her sex appeal, she was turned into a valet at one point, dressing in tropical garb and accompanying stars like "Elephant Boy" Tony Olivas and "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers—who'd later become the first man to hold the World Wrestling Federation heavyweight title.

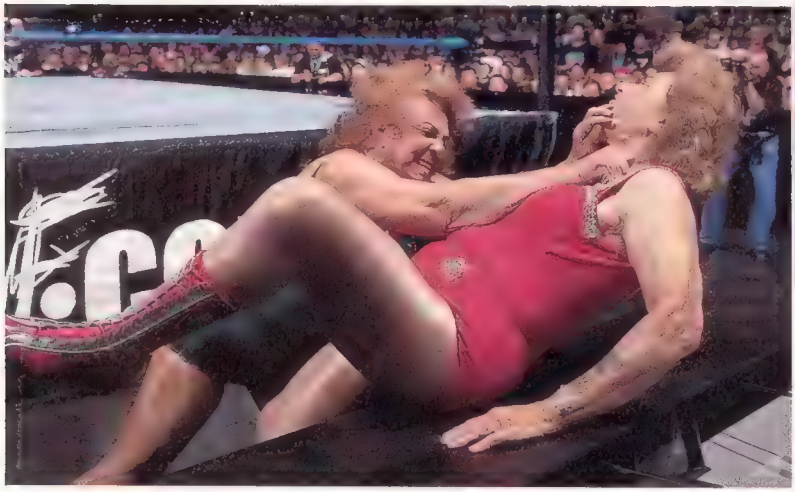
The early days of Ellison's career overlapped those of another giant of 20th century women's wrestling: Mildred Burke. Burke was strong, tough and athletic, but under the spell of a devious husband, Billy Wolfe, who booked most of the female wrestlers in North America and carried on affairs with many.

"He'd live with Mildred for two weeks, then another girl for two weeks, then another girl for two weeks," Moolah says. "After a while, Mildred started living with Billy's son. Oh, it was a mess."

Anxious to sever ties with the dysfunctional operation, Lillian aligned herself with Jack Pfeffer, a renegade promoter who'd infuriated his peers in the 1930s by exposing the predetermined nature of matches to the New York press, and endearingly called his traveling company a band of "freaks."

"Why do you want to wrestle all the

Moolah has proven she can mix it up with the men as well as the women, whether she's giving Harvey Wippleman a lift (above) or Jerry "the King" Lawler an earful (above right). (Right) Moolah's "Spider Lady" surprise caught Wendi Richter off-guard. Below, Moolah and fellow Hall of Famer Mae Young brawl at ringside.



time?" Pfeffer challenged Lillian one day, in his thick Yiddish accent. "I'm doing it for the *moolah*," the southerner fired back.

Pfeffer had a brainstorm: "We should make that your name."

As the Fabulous Moolah, the young woman eclipsed even Mildred Burke's reputation, winning her first championship in 1956 by beating Judy Grable in a tournament final in Baltimore. As planned, the money came—and Moolah was in no rush to squander it.

"I had a lot of enemies among female wrestlers, because I didn't drink all my money away in the bar and look like hell the next day," she says. "No fan could say he ever saw the Fabulous Moolah in the street or [in a compromising position on the hood of wrestler] Jackie Fargo's car in Nashville, like one of the girls we won't mention."

Pfeffer encouraged Moolah to save and invest. But he was less enthusiastic about another interest the star was cultivating—a hulking gladiator named Buddy Lee. Lee—who'd later cast a large shadow in Nashville as a country and western promoter—was actually an Italian-American from the Bronx; his real last name was Pino. Soon, that was the former Lillian Ellison's last name as well.

"Under different circumstances, we just would have been friends, the same way I was with the Elephant Boy," Moolah says. "But Jack was so worried about us dating that he drove us to each other."

While Moolah wrestled throughout the country, Lee stayed home in Columbia, opening a training facility on the couple's property and recruiting

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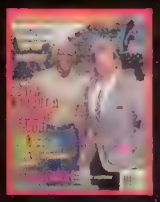
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the next generation of female wrestling talent. Although the marriage dissolved ("We loved each other," Moolah says, "but we were both too temperamental"), the business they started—Girl Wrestling Enterprises (GWE)—dominated the training and booking of female wrestlers until the 1980s. Among Moolah's protégés were her regular opponents: Toni Rose, Donna Christanello, Judy Martin and others.

In 1984, when it appeared that Moolah's career was winding to a close, a decision was made to groom trainee Wendi Richter as the next queen of the mat wars. Pop singer Cyndi Lauper linked herself to the attractive Texan, while legendary manager Captain Lou Albano sided with Moolah. In a Madison Square Garden clash televised on MTV, Moolah lost the championship to her former student.

Another pupil, Leilani Kai, then stepped in, driven by Moolah to capture the championship. The scheme succeeded, setting up a compelling match at the inaugural *WrestleMania* in 1985: Kai, the titlist, seconded by Moolah, against Richter, the popular underdog, managed by Lauper.

Once again, Richter became the World Wrestling Federation women's champ. But later that year, Moolah was brought in to wrest the title back. Dressed as the masked Spider Lady, the legend engaged her former protégé in an eight-minute shoot, pinning her, then unmasking in center ring in Madison Square Garden.

"Wendi knew I could beat her ass," Moolah says. "I taught her everything she knew. After the match, she was so mad, she wouldn't give up the belt in the ring. I said, 'You stupid idiot, everyone just saw you lose. You have to give it up.' Finally, we got to the dressing room. She threw the belt down, ran out of Madison Square Garden in her tights, and I haven't seen or heard from her since."

Moolah held onto the title, but interest in women's combat was declining in the World Wrestling Federation. During a 1986 tour of Australia, she lost the title to

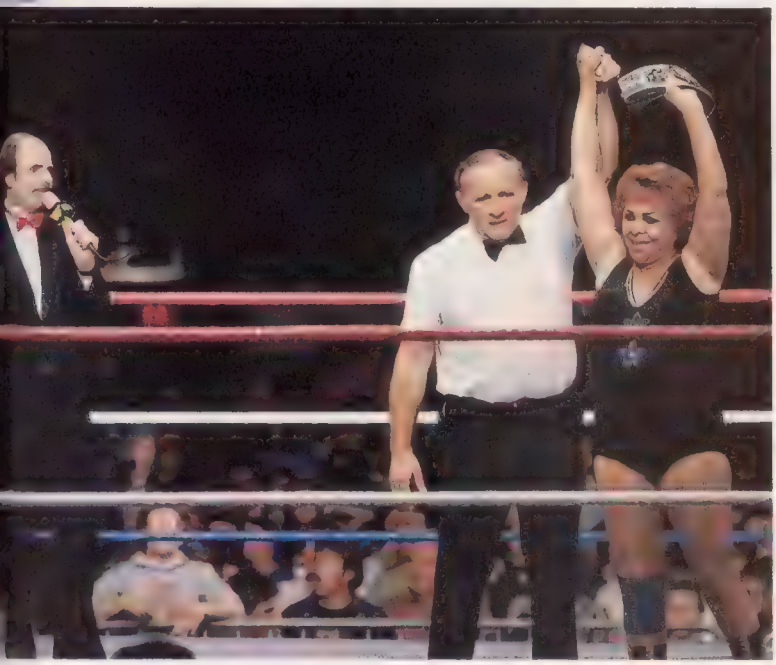
Velvet McIntyre in Brisbane, regaining it six nights later in Sydney. In 1987, Moolah was toppled by Sensational Sherri Martel, who eventually forged a reputation as a colorful and treacherous manager—while the women's championship was largely forgotten.

The aging luminary concentrated on training wrestlers and promoting small shows near her home. Then, in the late 1990s, she had what may have been her most memorable run in the World Wrestling Federation, joining forces with a colleague from years past, Mae Young. Together, they portrayed heedless senior citizens willing to jump into the fire and take dangerous bumps from both male and female adversaries.

In 1999, while rumored to be in her 70s, Moolah won the championship again, this time from Ivory. The same year, she cultivated a friendship with Dr. Timothy Pansegrau, a cardiologist who had treated her brother, Bill. "When Bill died, Dr. Pansegrau had to pull the tube from him," Moolah recalls. "And we cried together, like brother and sister."

Last October, the former champion stopped by the doctor's office with an

From her heyday as Federation Women's Champion (below), Moolah extended her career decades beyond the norm by feuding with The Kat (below left) and Ivory (above left). (Above), Moolah takes yet another foe to school with a snap-mare takedown.



autographed picture she'd promised. After she mentioned recent dizzy spells, the cardiologist examined her and ordered that she be checked into the hospital.

"He said there was something wrong with my heart, but that didn't make sense to me," says Moolah. "I told him, 'Look, I can get on my roof and do the shingles. I can get on my tractor and do the lawn. I can get in the ring and wrestle for an hour.'"

On the anniversary of her brother's death, Moolah found herself in the same hospital—Richland Memorial in Columbia—beginning two painful days of exploratory surgery. "The worst part of all was when I got into the recovery room," she recalls. "On both days, I had to keep my legs absolutely straight for six hours so my blood wouldn't clot."

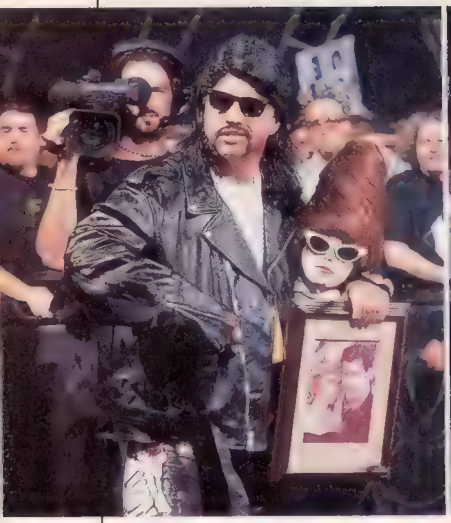
The legend had two-and-a-half closed arteries. But now, there was another problem. At Richland, she'd apparently acquired a life-threatening case of viral pneumonia. "It's not the kind of pneumonia you get from cold weather," she explains. "There's all kinds of sick people in the hospital. Evidently, I caught it there."

For most of November, Moolah remained in the hospital. She claims to have blacked out for 15 days, remembering little more than the dream-like image of looking down at herself on the two occasions when her heart stopped. On December 20, she had recovered well enough from both the pneumonia and her battles with the reaper for doctors to perform a successful angioplasty.

Believing the worst was over, Moolah returned home—only to be sent back to the hospital for another surgical procedure after she passed out and injured one of her vertebra. "In the ring, I know how to take a bump right, without hurting myself" she notes. "But this was a little bit different. You can't take a good bump if you're unconscious."

With her health issues neutralized, Moolah is busy chronicling her storied life in an autobiography to be published by ReganBooks. At her core though, the multiple-time champion defines herself not as an author, but as a wrestler. And, incredibly, she still intends to make another comeback in the World Wrestling Federation.

"God brought me back because I have a lot of unfinished things to take care of," she states. "Now, I want to do something I never did—wrestle The Rock. I think I can do it, as long as my partner is Stone Cold Steve Austin." ■



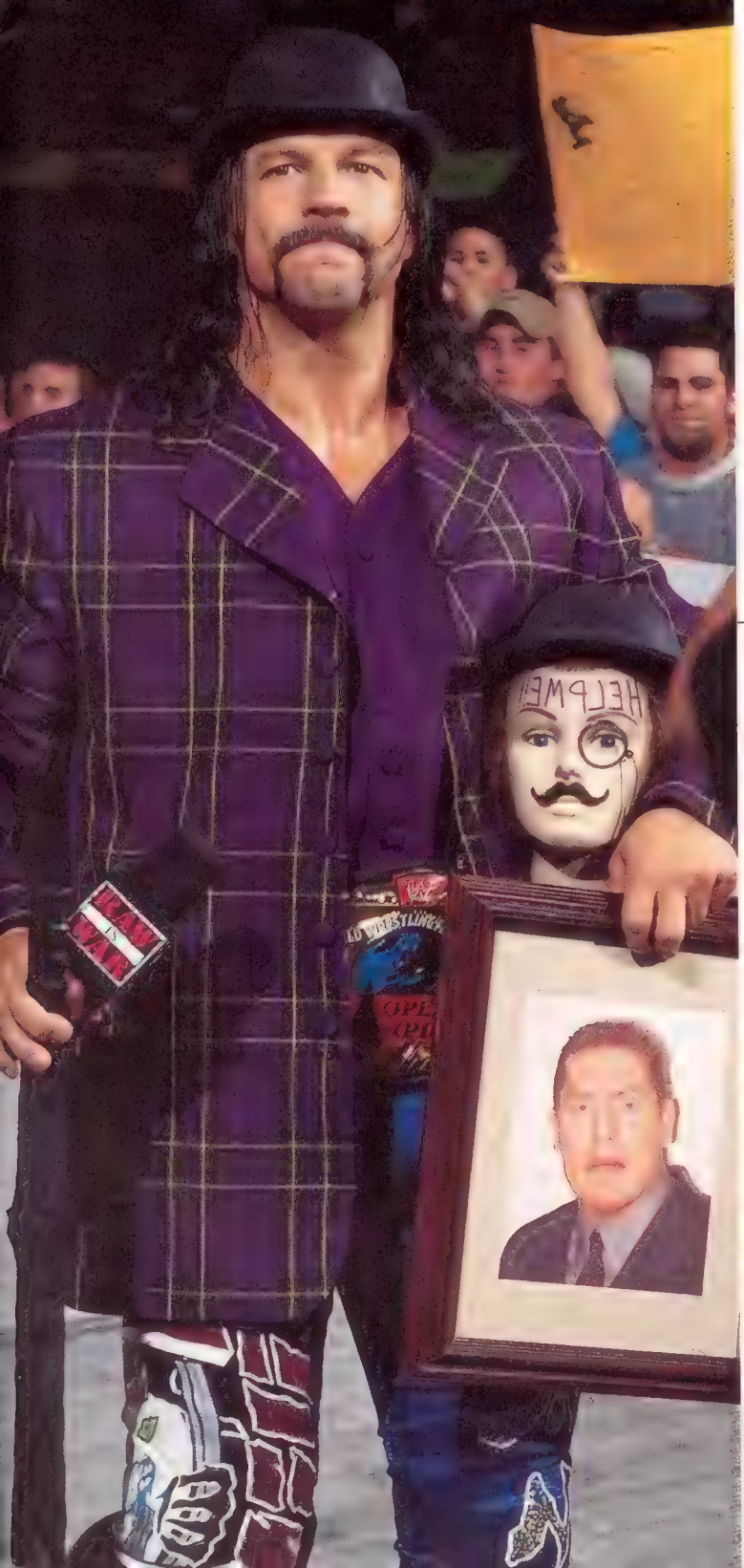
A Head for the Business

When Al Snow was 16 years old, he knew he wanted to be a professional wrestler. At the time, breaking into the business was very difficult and few people made it to the "big time"; Snow was no exception. For 13 years, he traveled the independent circuit, hoping to break into the upper echelon of sports-entertainment. Today, it's safe to say that his years of hard work and sacrifice have paid off, but Snow's road to success has not been an easy one. Without his hard work and dedication, Federation fans might never have had the opportunity to marvel at "the clown prince of sports-entertainment."

The year was 1982. Bob Backlund was World Wrestling Federation Champion, Pedro Morales held the Intercontinental title, and Stevie Wonder and Paul McCartney were burning up the charts with *Ebony and Ivory.* The term sports-entertainment was over a decade from being part of the American lexicon. By historical standards, 1982 was not a very memorable year, certainly not on par with 1492 or 1776.

But for a young high school student named Al Snow, it was very significant. In May of that year, Al Snow had his first match, taking his first big step toward becoming a professional wrestler.

"I remember my first match very well. It was on May 22, 1982 in Springfield, Ohio," Snow says. "At that time there wasn't a proliferation of wrestling schools like there is now. The wrestling business was a very closed society. It was like the Free Masons of a Masonic Lodge; you had to be sponsored by someone in order to be brought into the business. I had to call around to find someone who would be willing to take responsibility for me and my behavior. At 16, I spent about two years phoning different offices throughout the country to find someone who would train me. One person I spoke with was Gene Anderson in North Carolina, who told me of a tryout that he was having. At the same time, I was contacted by Jim Lancaster, who was in a show being put on by Dick the Bruiser at my high school. I told him that I was going down to Carolina to try out; he told me that if it didn't work out there, that he'd be willing to train me. It didn't work out, so I came back to Ohio and



Al Snow's Story Has Been 19 Years in the Making

by aaron williams

began training with him. He was sort of my sponsor for several years."

In the early 1980s, the territorial system was still in place. Once Snow finished high school, he traveled to different territories and wrestled some of the more established stars in whichever territory he was in at the time. This was how aspiring wrestlers learned the trade, paid their dues and earned the respect of others. But just as he was receiving his indoctrination into the business, the World Wrestling Federation went national and changed the territory system forever. Many places Snow had worked ceased to exist or were greatly reduced in stature, becoming what's known as independent organizations—they either weren't on television or were on in very localized markets. The Federation not only changed the nature of the business, but changed the direction of Al Snow's career.

"I became the guy who the independents brought in to have a good match with their top guys," he says. "I wasn't winning many matches, but I made sure I was good enough that if they ever wanted to bring me back, they could. For the next 13 years or so, I floated in and out of the so-called independent

"It's a real collaboration. I wish I could say that I am the ultimate genius, but I am not by any means."

organizations. I was known then as wrestling's best-kept secret."

During that time, Snow crisscrossed the country and traveled the world, wrestling whenever and wherever he got the chance. In wrestling's inner circle, he was respected as a top wrestler,

but few mainstream fans had ever heard of him. As the early '90s approached, though, things began to change. Newsletters and dirt sheets were getting more popular, and Snow used them as a marketing tool to further his career.

"I had a match with a guy named Sabu," he says. "I had just come back from Japan, and at the time, Sabu was the hottest guy on the indy circuit. We had this great match, and the newsletters wrote some really good stuff about it. Well, a lot of independent promoters as well as people from the Federation read about it in these newsletters. So Sabu and I kept wrestling each other, and the newsletters continued raving about our matches. The more we wrestled, the more my name got out, and the more opportunities I received."

Because of the publicity he received from these matches, Snow got booked in Extreme Championship Wrestling (ECW) by Paul Heyman. After working there for a while, he received a call from Jim Cornette, who was running Smoky

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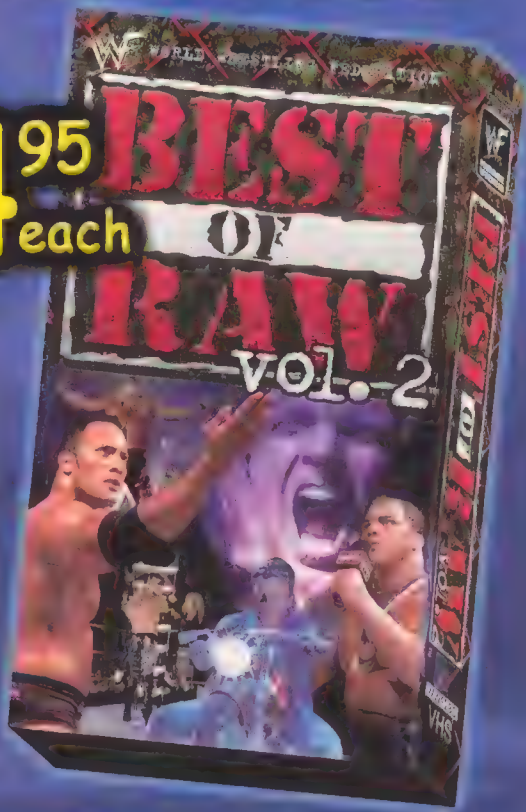

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"I floated in and out of organizations...I was known as wrestling's best-kept secret."

Mountain Wrestling—a feeder organization for the Federation. Cornette had seen an interview that Snow had done and liked it. He had an opening in the organization for a smart-aleck type and invited Snow to join his group.

Snow informed Cornette of his commitment to ECW, and asked if he would allow him to work for both organizations simultaneously. Cornette was willing to do so, but Heyman wasn't keen on the idea. Eventually, Snow worked only for Smoky Mountain, where he met Jim Ross, who was working as an announcer there.

Snow's hard work in Smoky Mountain paid off, and soon, he was brought up to the World Wrestling Federation. Unfortunately, his first stint did not go as well as he hoped.

"My first trip here was certainly less than memorable. I was Avatar for one night. Vince [McMahon] had this idea of trying to recreate the *Power Rangers* and *Mortal Kombat* in the ring, but it was very difficult to do because on those series, they only had to show the high spots of four or five moves. Unfortunately, that didn't translate well to the ring."

After failing in his first attempt in the Federation, Snow sat home for eight months. Then, he was put with Marty Jannetty in the New Rockers. He enjoyed that, but the concept fell flat and he was back to square one, sitting on the sideline waiting to do something.

During his time off the active roster, the Federation and ECW came to a sharing agreement. Snow called Paul Heyman, telling him that he would love to work for ECW again. Snow then asked the WF to release him from his contract, but the Federation—noting Snow's potential—decided to renew it instead.

His talk with Heyman, however, had planted a seed, and ECW asked Vince McMahon if it could have Snow on loan. McMahon agreed, and Snow went to ECW with the express purpose of getting himself over so that McMahon would want him back, Heyman would want to re-hire him, or some other organization would want him. As Snow tells it, he went down to ECW, worked his butt off, and "through the grace of God," got himself over. When he was called back to the Federation, Snow had a much different character—an insane man with a best friend made of Styrofoam.

"The whole idea behind HEAD was to bring out my insanity," Snow says. "I figured that anybody who had spent that much time and effort at any one thing and had still never broken through would finally lose it and have

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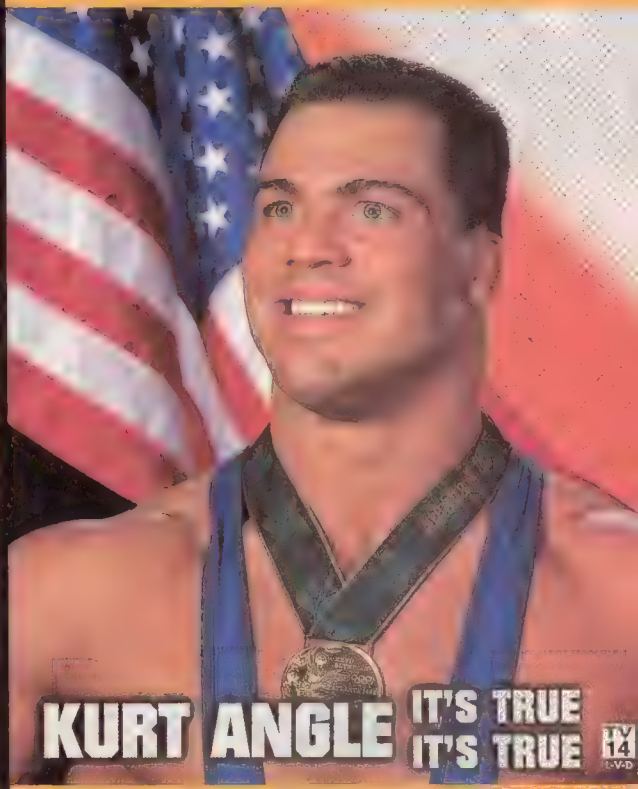

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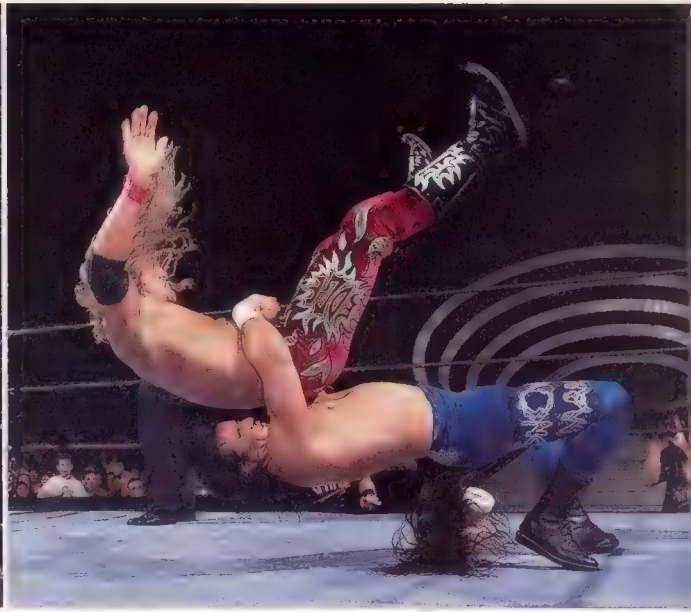


"I'm still very enthused to perform...If I didn't feel this way, I wouldn't be doing this."

a nervous breakdown. I kept trying to find a way to show that visually in the ring by talking to myself, picking at my clothes and doing other 'not normal' things. One night, I happened to walk backstage and saw the Styrofoam head and started talking to it as if it were a real person. It took off from there with HEAD, Pierre, Pepper and all the rest."

One might think that after spending all those years working on and perfecting his in-ring skills, he might be a bit perplexed by the fact that he is appreciated more for his out-of-ring antics than his performance in the squared circle. But as a seasoned veteran, he understands the nature of the business and knows that if one wants to make it long-term in sports-entertainment, one better be able to adapt to the times.

"I think I've grown along with the business. But I marvel at the fact that I used to do all the stuff that you see the Hardys do," he says. "In fact, I did a lot of that before they did and didn't get near the reaction that I do just by holding a plastic head in the air. Now, I think people respect me for what I can do in the ring, but they actually enjoy what I do out of the ring a lot more than they do my athletic abilities. People want to be entertained."

One of the things that Snow has enjoyed most since returning to the Federation has been his on-again, off-again "Head Cheese" partnership with Steve Blackman.

"I'm not bragging, but I think the stuff I did with Steve is some of the best stuff I've ever done outside the ring," Snow says. "It was like we had our own show within the show. People were tuning in just to see what we were going to do. I think people really found it interesting, intriguing and funny. We could have kept going a lot longer. Every now and then we seem to get hooked up with each other. He's kind of like venereal disease; you just can't get rid of him."

Besides working with Blackman, Snow has also made a name for himself with his never-ending "competition" with Mick Foley. The two met in ECW and would run into each other once in a while on the independent circuit. Because they only knew each other casually, they didn't begin picking on each other. But as soon as they became

much better acquainted, their little competition started.

Today, it has turned a bit one-sided as Snow has come to the conclusion that Foley is a bit disturbed. "I don't really go after him anymore. It's an obsession with him, though. I try to take the high road. It's just amazing with Mick, though," he relates. "He takes pains to plan these 'spontaneous' events where he can take a shot at me. It's actually kind of pathetic. He actually once had a dream about telling a joke about me; that's how obsessive he is. He went to Disneyland with his kids, and he's thinking about getting me. He's obsessed, sick, and he's really not very good at playing practical jokes. Plus, he's got such an ego. I mean he even wrote a book about himself. To be honest, I just don't find myself or my private life that interesting. I can't imagine anybody being interested in my life. I'm not that exciting. I don't have closets full of women's clothes."

One "jokester" who Snow does admire, however, is Marty Jannetty. "Rooming with Marty was like living with *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*," recalls Snow. "He'd do things like take the shower head off and fill it with jelly and cream so when I took a shower I got it all over me. One time, he took the time to disconnect all the shower-curtain rings so when I pulled the curtain it dropped, and I had to put it up again. You always had to be on your toes with Marty.

"The only joke I ever pulled was the night we did the reward poster for Pepper on *Sunday Night Heat*. I put Val Venis' cell phone number as the number to call; he got one call that night. I did it again the next night on *Raw Is War*, and told the cameraman to get a shot of the phone number. That night, Val literally got like a thousand calls and had to change his number. He took it pretty well, though. He said he would get me back, but to this day he hasn't."

After 19 years in the business, Snow believes that he still has another five or so good years left to give his fans. Physically, he's in better shape than he was years ago. Mentally, he's still very enthused about performing and entertaining, and he'll be the first to admit that if he didn't feel this way, he'd quit the business. For the kid who always loved the athletics, dramatics and flair of sports, he's as hooked as ever.

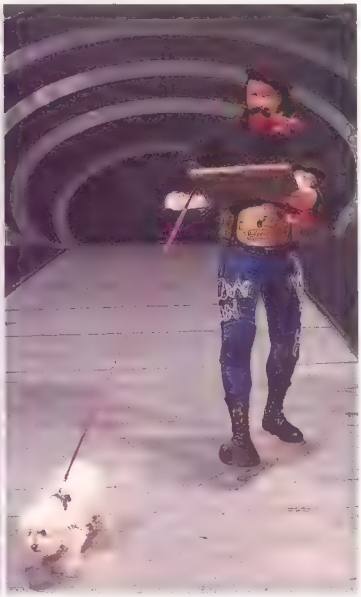
So, what would Al Snow say today to a 16-year-old who wants to get into this line of work?

"Seriously? Seek therapy, because this is probably one of the toughest businesses you could ever be involved in. You have to sacrifice so much and really have a passion for this. If you're getting involved in this for the romantic notions of fame and fortune, you're getting into the wrong business," he says. "Now, I don't regret doing this for a second. I've been able to go places, see things and meet people. I've got to do things that I never would have had the opportunity of doing. And I've learned things that I never would have been able to learn.

"On the other side of the coin, I've had to sacrifice and work my ass off constantly—I work harder now than when I first came into the business—just to keep what I've got," he continues. "I've had to drive 15 or 16 hours one-way, work a show for free, and drive right back to go to a regular job—just to stay in the business. When I worked in Smoky Mountain, I was driving from Ohio to Tennessee, running my [wrestling] school and trying to run a family. It's not as glamorous as it appears.

"That aside, if it's something you really want to do and really have a passion for, then you should give it a try, because when you're 65, you don't want to look back and say 'what if.' Even if you don't make it, you will have given it a shot, and you won't have those 'what ifs.' You should be aware of how few make it in this business. It's like if you wanted to be a football player and there was only one pro team. The odds are astronomical against making it. That's how hard it is to get here and how elite these guys are." ■

"I just don't find myself or my private life that interesting... I don't have closets full of women's clothing."



Cell Survivors

It's Truly Hellish Inside the Confines of the "Demonic Structure"

BY AARON WILLIAMS

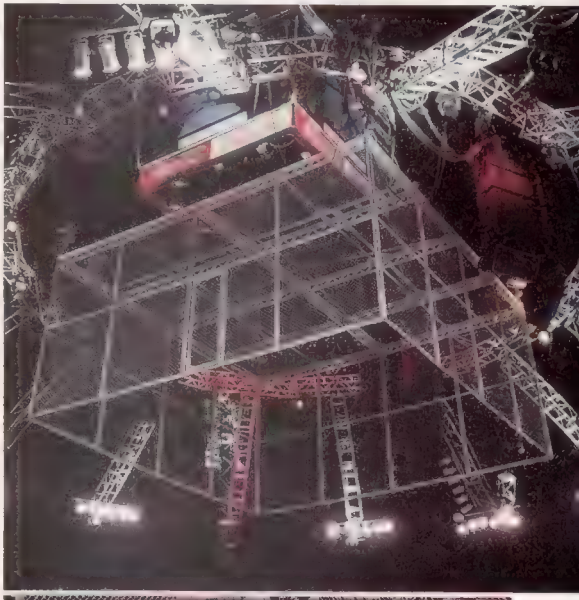
Jim Ross calls it "the most demonic structure ever to encircle a ring"; Undertaker promises that if you step inside it with him, he'll "make you famous"; and at the very mention of its name, Kane claims that he can already feel the pain.

There is no such thing as an easy match in the World Wrestling Federation; every time a Federation Superstar steps into the ring, he puts his body at risk. But, certain matches exact a heavier toll than others. For instance, a Cage match, Iron Man match or Last Man Standing match all test a Superstar's toughness, determination and will in ways that an ordinary match cannot. However, ask any Superstar who has participated in one, and he will tell you that there isn't anything quite like the Hell in the Cell.

At press time, there have been only seven Hell in the Cell matches since the first one was held four and a half years ago. Yet, despite its infrequency, the match's impact upon the World Wrestling Federation and its fans has been profound. After all, perhaps more than anything else, the images from these matches have come to define the Federation in the age of "Attitude": Shawn Michaels, bloodied and beaten, yet somehow able to get the three-count on Undertaker after Kane made his unexpected debut at *In Your House: Bad Blood* in October 1997; Mick Foley being tossed from the top of the cell by Undertaker—not once but twice—at *King of the Ring* in June 1998; Triple H defeating Cactus Jack at *No Way Out* in February 2000, in a Loser Must Retire match; and most recently, Kurt Angle retaining the Federation Championship in a six man Hell in the Cell which once again featured the Undertaker throwing someone (Rikishi) from the top of the cell.

"As high as it looks on television, even if you're in the arena staring up at it...you don't realize how high above the ring you really are until you're on top of the cell," says Kane.

It all started in October 1997. Undertaker and Shawn Michaels had engaged in a series of matches, but every time it appeared they finally would get it on *mano y mano*, either one of Michaels' cronies would interfere or Michaels would run off. In order to ensure that the two would settle their differences once and for all—without outside interference—the Hell in the Cell match was devised. As it turned out, even the cell was not enough to keep Kane from interfering in the match and attacking Undertaker. But in what surely



Where it all started: Undertaker and Shawn Michaels set the standard for years to come with their October 1997 epic.

must be classified as one of the most brutal matches in Federation history, the cell had made its mark as the toughest forum in which to test one's mettle.

"I was surprised by how tough Shawn Michaels was," recalls Undertaker. "He received one of the worst beatings of anyone I've ever seen. Hell in the Cell is geared for straight brutality, and there is nothing orthodox about it. It's two or however many people are involved in it, and only one man leaves."

The match between Michaels and Undertaker received rave reviews. When eight and a half months later, Undertaker and Mankind were set to square off in the second Hell in the Cell, expectations were running high. In his book, *Have a Nice Day,* Mick Foley states that he was worried that this match couldn't possibly live up to the previous cell encounter between Undertaker and Michaels. He wanted to do something special, something the fans would appreciate. During a conversation with Terry Funk, Foley mentioned that he wanted to start the match on top of the cell. Certainly, the spectacle of two mat warriors battling there in front of a sold-out crowd in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, would be something to behold. Still, no one could have foreseen what was to happen that evening.

Once the combatants made their way to the top of the cell, Mankind unleashed a series of chair shots on the Undertaker and then proceeded to attempt to suplex him onto the chair. Somehow, the Dead Man was able to shrug off the shots, and when Mankind began a suplex attempt, Undertaker grabbed him, led him towards the edge of the cell and sent him hurtling 20 feet through the air and through the Spanish announcers' table. As Mankind lay prone, surrounded by table fragments, Jim Ross could only yell, "With God as my witness, he's been broken in half!"

In a testament to his toughness and ability to withstand pain, Mankind recovered and continued with the match. At one point, it seemed that Mankind might actually win. But with the two battling again on top of the cell, Undertaker rallied and threw Mankind through the cell and onto the ring, which was now covered with thousands of tacks.

"In 25 years in the business," an astonished J.R. told the audience, "I have never witnessed anything even closely resembling this. These two gave you everything in their bodies…This has been, perhaps, the most ungodly match that I think we will ever see."

This match cemented Undertaker's and Mankind's places in Federation history. It was unique in many respects and the spectacle of their fight on top of the cell ushered in a new era. As Undertaker recalls, fighting on top of the cell is both exhilarating and dangerous.

"You're definitely the center of attention. It's a lot better to be standing on top looking down than to be on the bottom looking up, because that means you've probably been thrown off or through the cell," says Undertaker. "I've been very fortunate in that I've been the thrower rather than the throwee. But, it's a tremendous rush because as soon as you put your hands on the cell and begin your way up, the rumble in the arena grows. The closer you get to the top, the louder it gets. When you finally reach the top, the fans are at a fever pitch, because they know that something big is going to happen. And that's where I coined the phrase, 'I'll make you famous.'"

Kane, who had teamed with Mankind in a Hell in the Cell match against Stone Cold Steve Austin and Undertaker just two weeks prior to *King of the Ring*, echoes 'Taker's

views on the danger of being on top of the cell.

"As high as it looks on television—even if you're in the arena staring up at it, or looking down on it, you don't realize how high above the ring you really are until you're on top of the cell. If you start thinking about what can happen while you're battling up there, the results aren't going to be very good."

On August 24, 1998, Kane and Mankind would once again enter the cell, and although this match didn't receive the accolades of the Undertaker vs. Mankind match, the match certainly lived up to Hell in the Cell standards.

Six months later, Undertaker introduced Big Boss Man to the pleasures of the cell at *WrestleMania XV*, and the following year, Triple H established himself as one of the toughest Superstars in Federation history by defeating Cactus Jack in an exceptionally brutal Loser Must Retire match at *No Way Out*.

While the first six Hell in the Cell matches involved either two or four Superstars, the seventh, at *Armageddon* this past December, involved six—Stone Cold Steve Austin, The Rock, Kurt Angle, Rikishi, Triple H and Undertaker. This match turned out to be one for the ages, as all six competitors gave everything they had with Angle's championship at stake. Angle ended up winning the match, but not before Rikishi was tossed off the top of the cell by Undertaker and every Superstar had suffered more than a little pain.

No stranger to competition, Angle had this to say about the match and competing inside the cell: "I was closed in the cell with five other guys. It's very overwhelming, intimidating and brutal. Anything goes. You're climbing up the walls; you're getting banged off the cell; and you're getting thrown out of the ring. I was climbing to the top of the cell and was so tired, I could hardly make it without falling off. Then, I got up there and got whacked in the head with a chair. It can be a very frightening thing."

As harrowing an experience as a Hell in the Cell match

The cell's hellish highlights: (opposite, top) Cactus Jack dangles perilously from the cell as Triple H goes in for the kill. (Above) As a bloodied Michaels lies prone, Kane makes his debut in 1997 at the first Hell in the Cell match. (Below, clockwise from left) Rikishi and The Rock battle, Triple H and Cactus Jack trade blows, Mankind and 'Taker brawl on the roof and Austin works over Triple H.

can be, the moments before the match can be just as nerve-wracking for the participants. "There's something that overcomes you," says Undertaker. "You know that if you've been put in a Hell in the Cell match, you've been put there for a reason. It's kind of a deal where there is no other way to settle an issue than to go to the cell. The history of the cell goes through your mind.

"When I was preparing for my match with Mankind, I kept remembering the match I'd had with Shawn Michaels—the brutality and the beating," continues Undertaker. "All these things rush through your mind because you don't want them happening to you. You have to realize that you're laying it all on the line, and remember that you have to protect your backside at the same time."

Kane echoed Undertaker's sentiments. "I definitely had a different feeling about this match. The Hell in the Cell match is brutal and violent—even more than other matches. You're definitely aware of the danger from the moment you step out there."

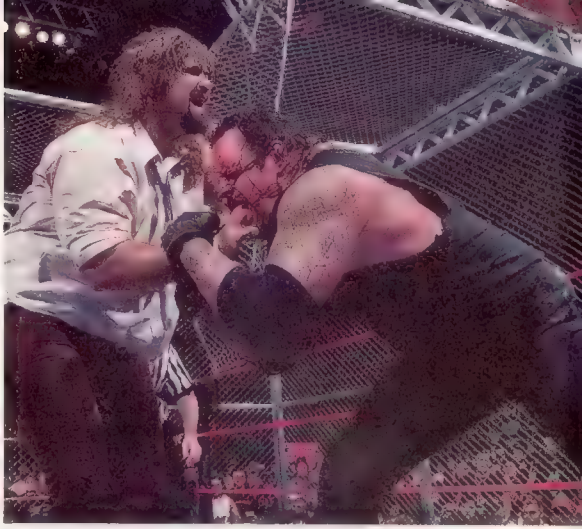
For Angle, nothing could have prepared him for the actual experience. "I wasn't used to anything like that. Now, I'm used to combat and very physically grueling matches. But knowing that if I leave my feet I could end up 20 feet below, that is something that completely boggles the mind. You don't know how terrifying it is until you are in there doing it.

"To be blunt, I won't be upset if I never have to be in another Hell in the Cell match again," Angle continues. "I'm glad that it worked out for me. It's amazing how much we do for the fans, and I hope they appreciate what we do and the risks we take for them."

"The Hell in the Cell match pretty much sums up what Undertaker is all about when he is in the ring," 'Taker says, "and that's sheer brutality."

As far as the action inside in the cell, it too is different from either an ordinary match or even a cage match. As strange as it may seem, the cell provides Kane a more intimate atmosphere with his opponent. For Undertaker, the cell becomes an adrenaline-inducing structure because only the strong survive, and it brings out the best or worst—depending on how you view things—in him. And as far as Angle is concerned, the ever-present danger forces him to be on his toes at all times because anything can happen.

Despite being around for only four and a half years, the Hell in the Cell has truly made its mark and has become special to fans and Superstars alike. It is the ultimate test for the toughest of the tough and will forever be linked to the careers of Undertaker, Mankind/Cactus Jack and Triple H.



From the epic war with Mankind at *King of the Ring* in June 1998 (above) to his *WrestleMania XV* match against the Big Boss Man, Undertaker has reigned as Master of the Cell.

Undertaker has been in more of these matches than anyone else (five) and feels a special bond with the match.

"I think you pretty much have to link us [Hell in the Cell and Undertaker] together. I've been in more of these matches than anyone else, and I've been involved in some of its most memorable moments. The Hell in the Cell pretty much sums up what Undertaker is all about when he is in the ring—and that's sheer brutality."

To date, only 10 Federation Superstars have set foot inside the cell. In the future, we may see more and they'll certainly prepare themselves as best they can. But, as each cell survivor will tell, there probably is no real way to prepare for this type of match. For their own well being, the best thing they can probably do is heed Kane's advice.

"I think the best advice I can give is to give unto others before they can give unto you. That's the best advice for the Hell in the Cell. Take care of business as quickly as you can." ■

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STARTING FROM SCRATCH

MARK HENRY'S BATTLE WITH THE BULGE MEANT RE-LEARNING EVERYTHING HE KNEW

Mark Henry has never lacked charisma. He was blessed with a smile that can light up a sold-out arena and a personality that made a love affair with a 70-something woman seem believable. Instead, it has been physical issues that have hampered Henry's climb up the ladder in sports-entertainment. The man known as "Sexual Chocolate" admits that he wasn't always focused on working out and eating properly.

When he did hit the gym, he didn't train properly. He concentrated on heavy weights, which leads to increased muscle mass. It was this same routine that led him to the 1992 Summer Olympics, where he competed in weightlifting. However, in the World Wrestling Federation, excess bulk can lead to injury; stamina is more coveted. A fundamental change was in order, so Federation officials sent Henry to Ohio Valley Wrestling (OVW) in Louisville, Kentucky, last spring to improve his physical conditioning.

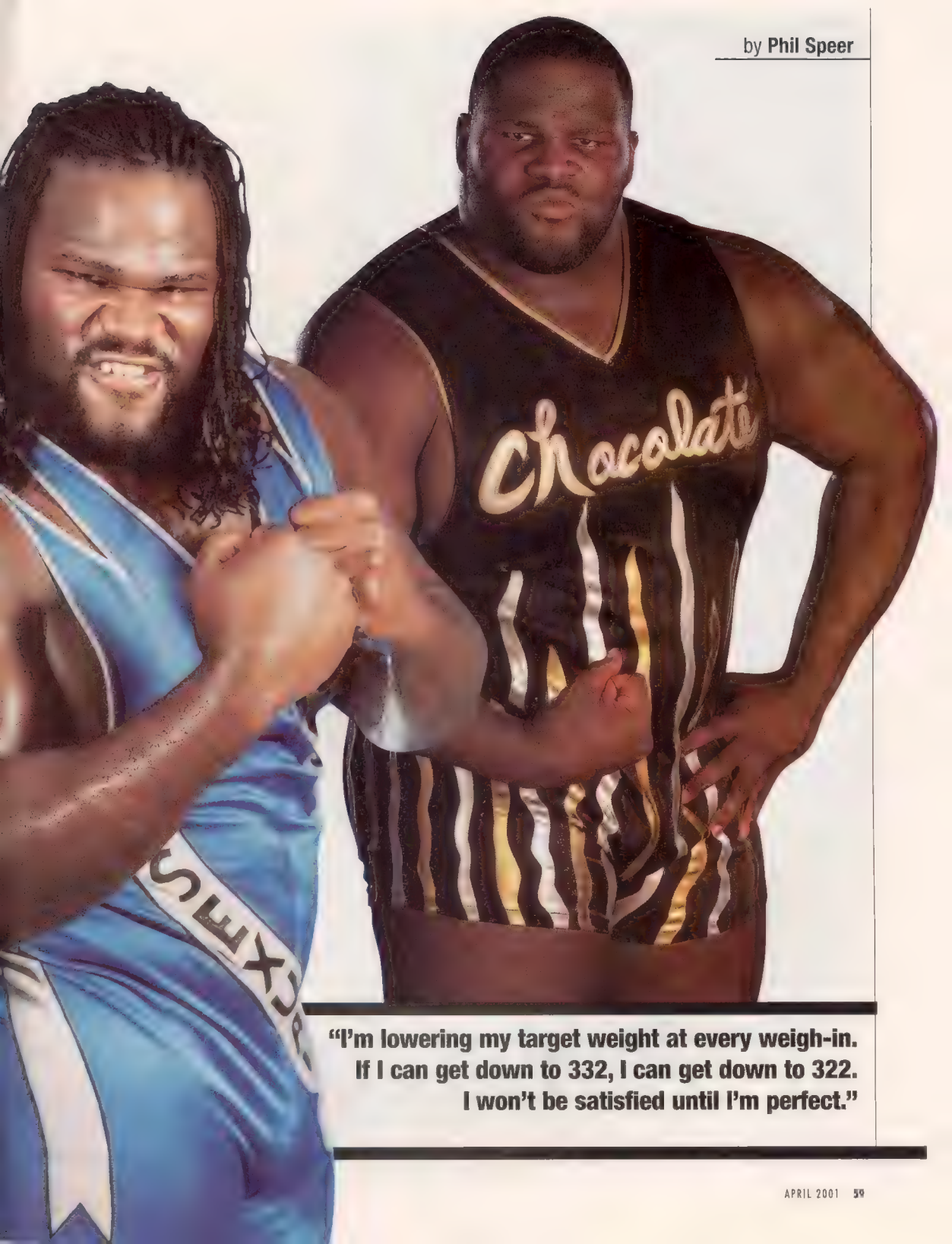
"I [used to travel] with Rocky [The Rock]," Henry says. "He would say, 'Come on Mark, let's go to the gym.' And I'd reply, 'Man, go ahead. I'll see you at the building.' Now I realize how much I was missing. That's part of our job. He looked at it like that, and I didn't. Now I can see it that way."

The numbers don't lie. When Henry went to Louisville, he tipped the scales at 394 pounds. By late January, he weighed in at 332, which he originally felt would be his ideal weight. He has since changed his mind.

"It seems like I'm lowering my target weight at every weigh-in," he says. "If I can get down to 332, I can get down to 322. I won't be satisfied until I'm perfect."

Perfect would be 8 to 10 percent body fat (he was at 24 percent when he arrived in Louisville and estimates that he's in the teens now), and

by **Phil Speer**



"I'm lowering my target weight at every weigh-in. If I can get down to 332, I can get down to 322. I won't be satisfied until I'm perfect."

"just looking damn good. I've always been pretty, but now it's time to take it to another level."

Henry takes Sundays off. He works out twice a day the rest of the week. Factoring in practice with OVW, "it's almost like having three training sessions. The only days we don't practice are the days we have shows."

In his personal workouts, he spends more than an hour on cardiovascular training—sprints on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; distance on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. He also invests 90 minutes conditioning his muscles—two days each week on back/biceps, chest/triceps and legs. But these days, when he works out those muscle groups, he's not interested in building mass.

"[I'm doing] a lot more repetitions," he says. "I'm trying to burn fat and lean the muscle out. I do a lot of stretching (five to 10 minutes before and after working out) to make the muscle longer and more attractive.

"Even though I'm built like an athlete, I wasn't conditioned like an athlete. I was conditioned like a weight lifter. Once I ceased training like a weight lifter…my cardiovascular condition improved dramatically."

Of course, in the battle to lose weight, working out is only half the struggle. A proper diet is also necessary. Again, fundamental changes were in order for Henry.

"Anybody who considers *diet* a short-term thing is wrong," Henry says. "It's only going to work if you live it. If you do it as a diet for a short amount of time, it'll work temporarily, but as soon as you stop, the weight will come back."

In the past, he says, "I never cared to dissect how much I was consuming as long as I was full."

Not anymore.

Henry has reduced his daily caloric intake by 1,000-2,000 calories, to 3,000 calories a day. He eliminated empty calories like desserts and other sweets that he previously couldn't resist and pays close attention to his carbohydrate levels, consuming at least 500 grams of protein daily.

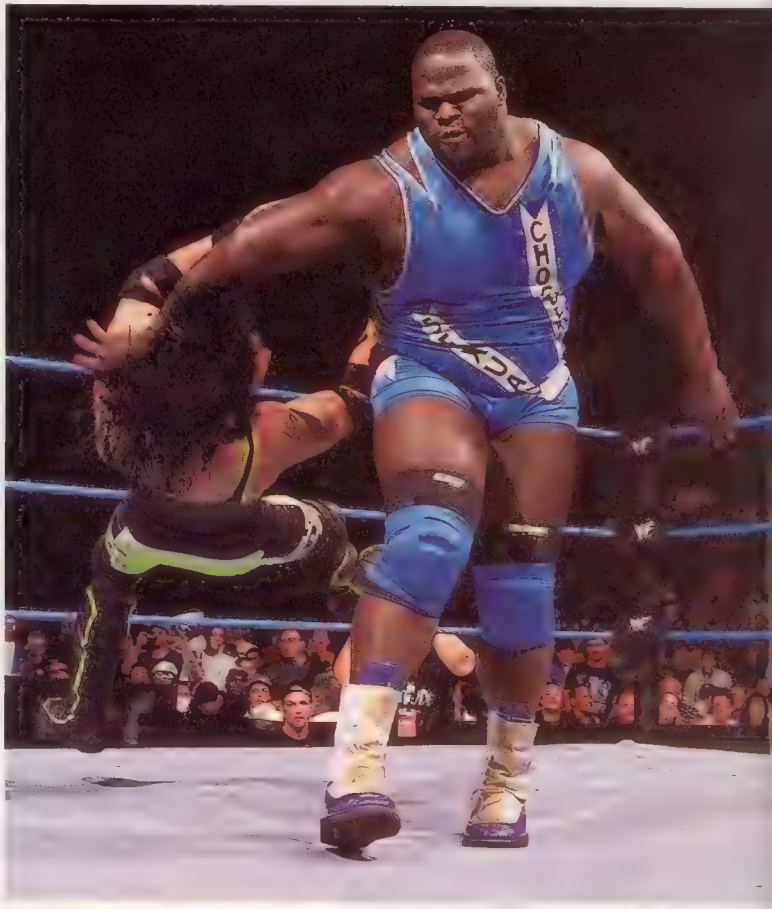
"You have to learn about food," he says, "so you know what your body can accept and what you can dispose of."

To that end, Henry has read several diet books and has been working with two exercise physiologists (one in Louisville and another in his hometown in Texas). He's had blood drawn and analyzed to determine which foods his body consumes well. Once the results were in, "it eliminated probably 70 percent of the stuff I was eating."

His salt intake is down considerably. Coupled with his improved physical condition, it has reduced his blood pressure to 112/67 by late January.

"There are guys walking the Earth at 225 pounds who have higher blood pressure than me," he says. "I'm in an elite category when it comes to blood pressure."

When you add it all up, Henry's physical condition has improved dramatically. He's in such good shape



that he says he's not even worried about getting injured. And his confidence is also higher than ever. It's the new, improved Mark Henry.

"Guys that I've worked with before," he says, "when I work with them again, they won't believe it." ■

THIS DIET'S ON THE MARK

Once Mark Henry learned what his body could easily consume, he altered his diet.

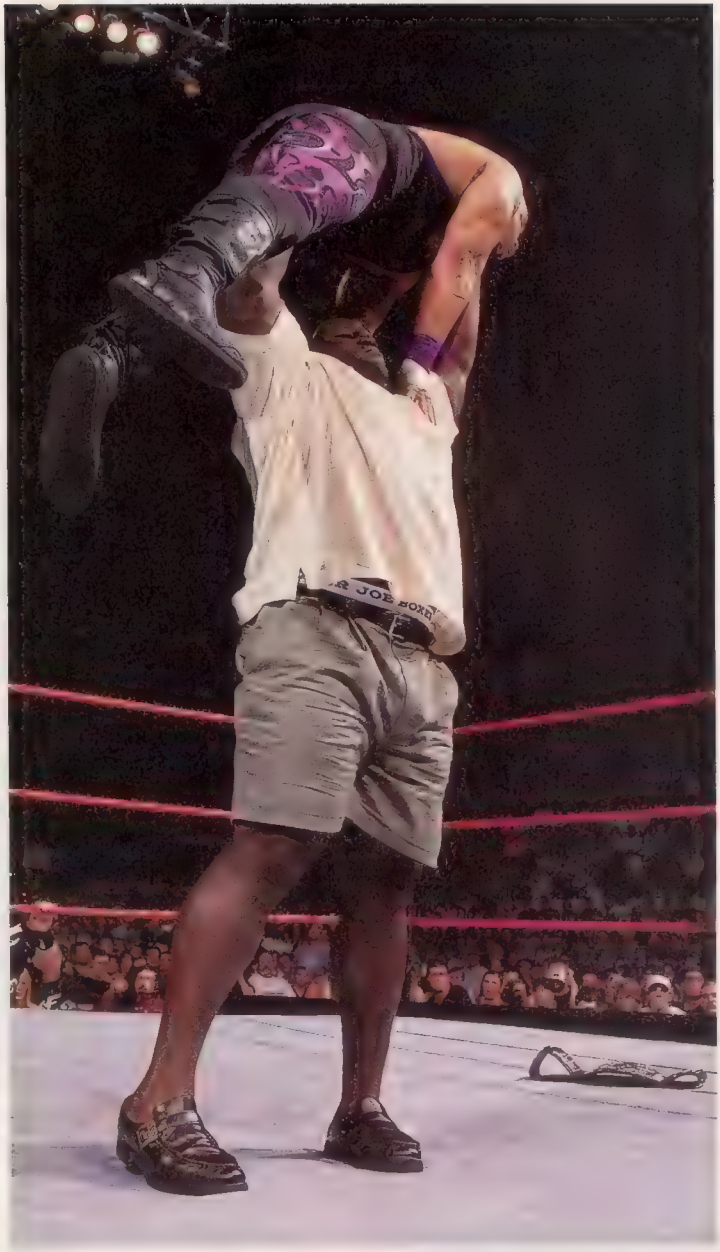
A blood test determined that many soy, yeast and starch products weren't easily digestible, which eliminated pies, cakes, bread, potatoes and potato chips. On the other hand, even though shellfish is high in cholesterol, it's easily digested by Henry's body, as are different types of nuts. Here's a sample of the types of foods Henry eats:

Breakfast: Oatmeal, strawberries, whole milk (organic only), egg whites (6-8). He also drinks almost a half-gallon of distilled water each morning.

Lunch: Foods high in iron and beta-carotene (including spinach, green beans, broccoli, cauliflower and carrots), and 10-14 ounces of fish or chicken (no red meat).

Dinner: A protein meal or protein bar. Although his doctors condemn it, Henry is practicing what he calls the punishment diet. If he eats anything after 9 p.m., he'll immediately burn off the calories.

"I'll force myself to do 100 sit-ups and 100 push-ups, or I'll put my sweats on and get on the highway," he says, "just to keep my mind going, 'Are you sure you want to eat that?'"



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POWER BEHIND THE POLLS

The 2000 Elections Are Over, but *Smackdown Your Vote!* Is Just Beginning

BY PHIL SPEER

This is the time of year when get-out-the-vote and voter-registration campaigns pack up, go on hiatus or cease completely. After all, the next election isn't until November. We're 18 months from the next Congressional election, and the next Presidential race—which, statistically speaking, is the one Americans consider most important—isn't until 2004.

The World Wrestling Federation and its *Smackdown Your Vote!* partners, however, are taking the opposite approach.

"We're looking toward the future, to do it over a longer period of time, not just right before the election," said Kurt Angle at a press conference in Washington, DC, announcing the continuation and expansion of *Smackdown Your Vote!* "We're in our infancy right now. We're looking for greater numbers in the future—tremendous numbers to come."

Launched in August 2000, the *Smackdown Your Vote!* campaign was a rousing success. With help from the Federation's partners—Project Vote Smart, Youth Vote 2000 (now Youth Vote Coalition), the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) and MTV's Choose or Lose—150,000 new young voters were registered. One million new young voters participated in the 2000 election.

"We did it for two months, and we felt we had a good thing going," Federation CEO Linda McMahon said at the press conference. "We want to continue to give something back to all the citizens of this country—our great fans and supporters. We want to continue *Smackdown Your Vote!*"

To increase awareness of the campaign, Angle was named honorary chairman. Angle takes the responsibility of voting seriously; he has voted in every election since he turned 18.

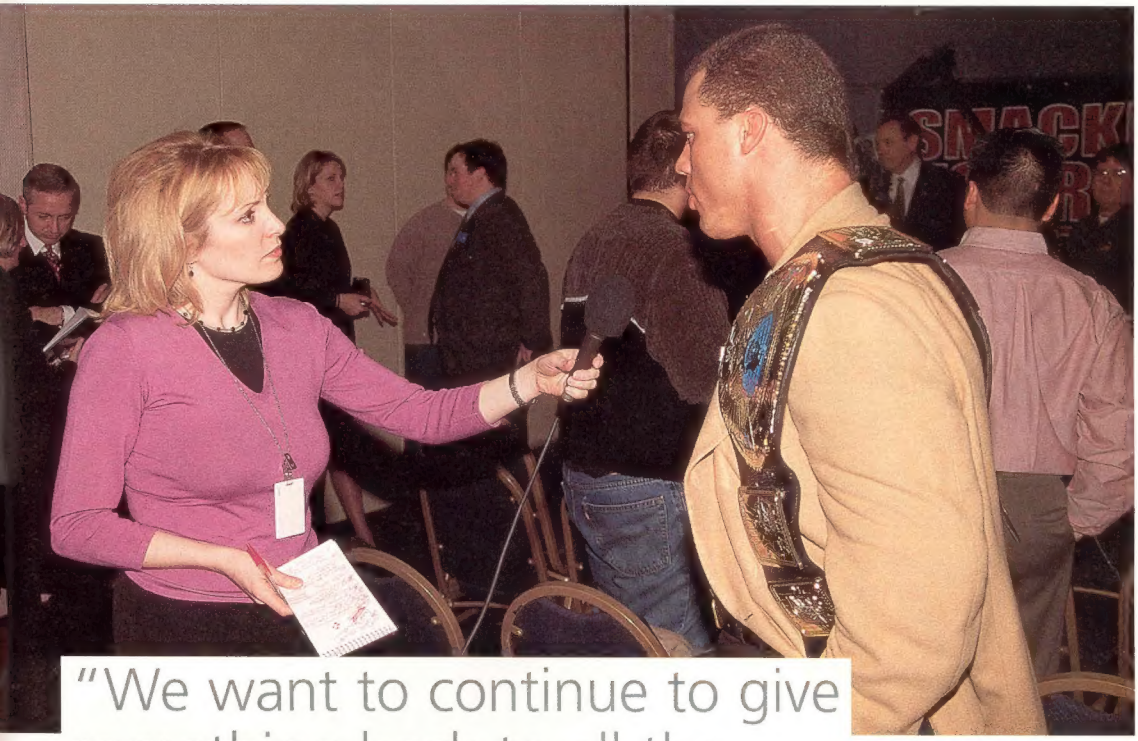
Also announced at the press conference was the addition of two new partners to the *Smackdown Your Vote!* coalition: the National Foundation for Women Legislators (NFWL) and Youth e-Vote.

NFWL is a non-partisan organization serving federal and state female legislators, and supporting effective government.

"We need to motivate the youth to get out there and become politically active on every level," said NFWL's Maureen McMahon (no relation to the Federation's McMahon

Get Involved!

Founded in August 2000, *Smackdown Your Vote!* is a partnership of non-profit, government, corporate and online organizations working to encourage youth participation in politics. Members of the partnership include the Youth Vote Coalition, Project Vote Smart, the National Association of Secretaries of State and World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc.



"We want to continue to give something back to all the citizens of this country—our great fans and supporters."

family). "They vote for women across the board. They vote for women on both sides. They vote for women on all levels. And that's why we're glad to be working with the World Wrestling Federation, Youth Vote 2000 and Youth e-Vote on this initiative."

The other new *Smackdown Your Vote!* partner, Youth e-Vote, is a national coalition devoted to making future voters of today's students. According to Donald Tighe of Youth e-Vote, 1.3 million students from 10,000 schools in all 50 states participated in online elections at Youth e-Votes' website (www.youthevote.net). Tighe added that in 1996, the most recent year for which data is available, only one-third of newly eligible voters cast their vote. Youth e-Vote aims to improve those numbers by involving potential voters in the process even before they're eligible.

Politicians seem to agree that the entire *Smackdown Your Vote!* campaign has the potential to register millions of new voters. Several elected officials attended the press conference, including state senator Nancy Boettger (R-IA) representing NFWL, and two secretaries of state, Mary Kiffmeyer (R-MN) and Bill Jones (R-CA) representing NASS.

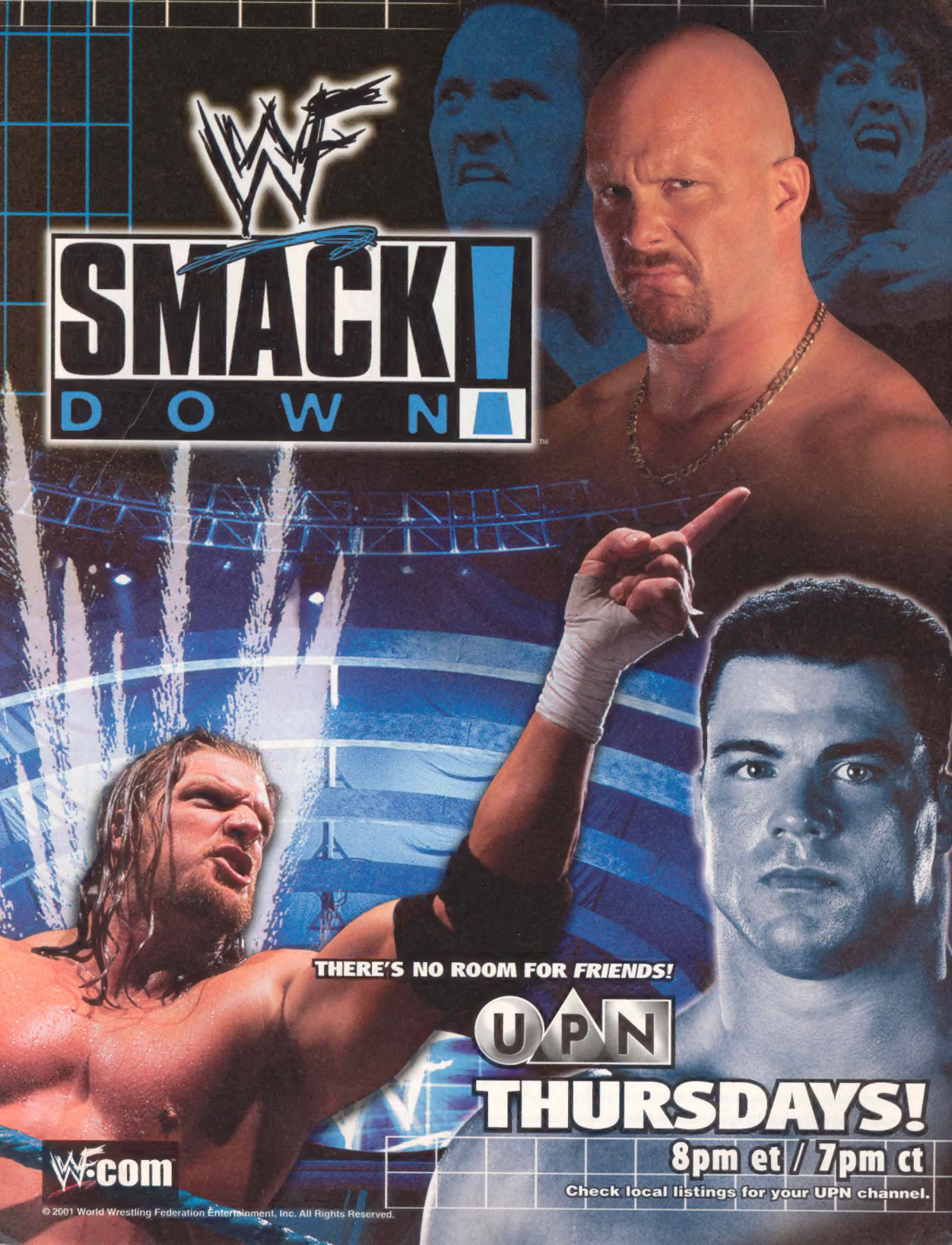
"It's easy to talk to the same people over and over," Jones said. "It's hard to talk to the new ones. How do we go about it? This is an excellent way."

Hours after the press conference, *Smackdown Your Vote!* hosted a party to celebrate its accomplishments and welcome its new partners and new honorary chairman. At the *Smackdown Your Vote!* Celebration, about 1,500 supporters crammed DC's Club Insomnia to dance, mingle and—if they hadn't done so already—register to vote. Volunteers from the Youth Vote Coalition and other organizations set up a table and signed new voters for future elections.

Among the guests at the party—in addition to McMahon and Angle—was Christopher Shays, a Republican member of the U.S. House of Representatives, who serves Connecticut's fourth district.

"We need to get young people actively concerned about who represents them in Washington, who represents them as President, and it's great that the World Wrestling Federation has the interest in this," Shays said. "The Federation has such an appeal to young and old alike—I mean, I have a ball watching it. It's real theater." ■

Phil Speer is a writer for WF.com.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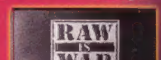
WWFL



RAW

JER1 Chris Jericho™ 4 designs

JERL

JERC

KIS1 KISS® 8 designs

KISL

KISC

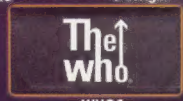
ACD AC/DC 4 designs

ACDL

ACDC

WHO The Who 6 designs

WHOL



WHOC

9XRS1 Rolling Stones™ 3 designs

9XLRS

RSCC

PHOTOS ON CHECKS MAY VARY

PLEASE NOTE: Orders will be shipped to the address printed on your checks or labels, unless otherwise indicated. Only written orders will be accepted. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

Ordering Instructions

Enclose the following items in an envelope:

A. **COMPLETED ORDER FORM**
B. **VOIDED CHECK** (or reorder form) from current supply with any changes indicated.
C. **DEPOSIT SLIP** (also from current supply)
D. **PAYMENT CHECK,** payable to FanChecks

Name _____

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Check Design # _____

Start Check with # _____
If not specified checks will start with 301

CHECK PRICE:

200 Single Checks	$17.95	
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150 Duplicate Checks	$19.95	
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Special lettering on checks ☐ *Script* ☐ *Elegance* ☐ *Contempo*	$2.50	
144 Address Labels	$10.95	
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Special lettering on labels ☐ *Script* ☐ *Elegance* ☐ *Contempo*	$2.50	
Leather Checkbook Cover Style # ___ ___ ___	$19.95	
Shipping & Handling (per item)	$3.95	
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SUBTOTAL	$	
N.Y.S. Residents add applicable Tax	$	
GRAND TOTAL	$	

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